

Arrouet de Voltaire

K ZADIG: $\frac{12602. a}{2}$

OR, THE
BOOK OF FATE,

AN ORIENTAL HISTORY,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

M. DE VOLTAIRE.

—*Quo fata trabunt, retrabuntque sequamur,
Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum,
Tendimus in Latium.* VIRG.

Cooke's Edition.



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EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO THE

SULTANA SHERAA.

THE EIGHTEENTH OF THE MONTH SCHEVAL, IN THE
YEAR OF THE HEGIRA 837.

DELIGHT of every eye, torment of every heart, divine light of the mind! I kiss not the dust of thy feet, because thou seldom walkest, and when thou dost, it is only on the carpets of Iran, or with thy way strewed with roses. You are here presented with the translation of a book wrote by an ancient sage, who enjoying the happiness of having nothing to do, thought proper to amuse himself with writing the history of Zadig; a performance which, I may venture to assure you, expresses much more than it seems to express. And I beg you will indulge me so far, as to read it over, and then pass your impartial judgment upon it: for although you are in the bloom of life; though every pleasure courts you; though you are the darling of nature; possess internal accomplishments adequate to your beauty; though you are praised throughout the world from the night till the morning, and consequently have a right to divest yourself of common sense; yet you have, notwithstanding, a mind filled with wisdom, and an imagination uncommonly delicate. I have frequently heard you discourse more learnedly than the wisest dervise, with his venerable beard and pointed bonnet. You are discreet without being distrustful; mild and gentle without weakness; and beneficent with discernment: you love your friends, and do not make yourself any enemies. The sprightly sallies of your wit never borrow any lustre from detraction; you never speak or do ill, notwithstanding the prodigious ease with which you could do both. In short,

your soul has constantly appeared as pure and faultless as your person. You have, moreover, a small fund of philosophy ; which induces me to believe that you will better relish this performance, the work of a sage, than any other lady of your quality.

It was originally written in the ancient Chaldee, which neither you nor I understand ; from whence it was translated into Arabick, to amuse the celebrated Sultan Ouloug-beg. This was at the time when the Arabians and Persians began to write the Thousand and One Nights, and the Thousand and One Days. Ouloug found most pleasure in reading Zadig ; but the sultanas preferred the Thousand and One. ‘ How can ye,’ said the wise Ouloug, ‘ admire stories void of sense, and without meaning ?’—‘ Oh !’ replied the sultanas, ‘ the less sense there is in them, the more they are in taste ; and the less their merit, the greater their commendation.’

I flatter myself, great patroness of wisdom, that you will not resemble those thoughtless sultanas, but will deign to adopt the sentiments of Ouloug. I even hope that, when you are weary of general conversations, which have a great resemblance to the Thousand and Ones, I shall be happy enough to find a minute in which I may have the honour of speaking to you in the voice of reason. Had you been Thalettris, in the days of Scander ; had you been the Queen of Sheba, in the time of Solomon ; those kings would have been proud to visit you.

May the celestial virtues grant, that your pleasures find no interruption, your charms know no decay, and your happiness be everlasting !



APPROBATION.

I THE underwritten, who have obtained the reputation of learning, and even that of being a man of wit, have read this manuscript, which I find, to my great mortification, is curious, amusing, moral, philosophical, and well worth reading, even by those who dislike romances: I have therefore thought proper to depreciate it, and have accordingly assured the CADI-LESQUIRE, that it is a most detestable performance.

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ALPHABETICAL

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ZADIG:

OR THE

BOOK OF FATE.

CHAP. I.

The Blind of one Eye.

THERE lived at Babylon, in the reign of King Moabdar, a man named Zadig. He was endowed by nature with an uncommon genius; and his parents, who were persons of rank, took care to cultivate it with an excellent education. Though rich and young, he knew how to moderate his passions; he had nothing in him affected; he disdained the ostentation of wisdom, and knew how to pity the weaknesses of his fellow-creatures. Every one was surprized to find, that though he had such a fund of wit, he never exposed, by his raillery, those impertinent and seditious discourses, ~~those rash slanders, those ignorant decisions, those rude jests,~~ and that vain sound of words, which, in Babylon, went by the name of polite conversation. He had learned, in the first book of Zoroaster, that self-love is a bladder swelled with wind, from whence tempests proceed whenever it is pierced. ~~In particular, he never boasted of his conquests among the fair sex, and of his bringing them into subjection.~~ He was too generous to be afraid of conferring obligations on the ungrateful, following this great precept of Zoroaster—*When thou eatest, give to the dogs, though they should growl at*

thee. He was as wise as it was possible; for he sought not the company of any but such as were famous for their wisdom. He was acquainted with the sciences of the ancient Chaldeans; was not ignorant of such physical principles of nature as were then discovered; and knew as much of metaphysics as has ever yet been known; that is to say, little or nothing of the matter. He was firmly persuaded, in spite of the philosophy of his time, that the year consisted of three hundred and sixty-five days and an half, and that the sun was situated in the centre of the earth: but when the chief magi told him, with an insulting haughtiness, that he entertained heretical sentiments, and was an enemy to the state, for believing that the sun turned about it's own axis, and that the year consisted of twelve months, he was wise enough to avoid the appearance of anger or contempt.

As Zadig possessed great riches, and had consequently many friends; and as he had also an excellent constitution, an amiable figure, a mind just and moderate, and a heart sincere and noble; he imagined that he might be happy. He therefore determined to marry a gay young lady, named Semira, whose beauty, birth, and fortune, rendered her the most desirable person in Babylon. He had a solid and virtuous affection for this lady, and she loved him with the most passionate tenderness. A short time before their intended union, as they were walking together near one of the gates of Babylon, under a row of palm-trees on the banks of the Euphrates, they saw a band of men, armed with sabres, bows and arrows, approaching towards them. These were the attendants of young Orcan, nephew to a minister of state, whom the concubines of his uncle had persuaded might commit, with impunity, whatever crimes he pleased. Although he had none of the internal accomplishments of Zadig, yet he imagined himself to be greatly his superior, and was therefore enraged at not being preferred before him. This jealousy, which arose merely from his vanity, induced him

to believe that he loved Semira to distraction; fired with which notion, he determined to carry her away by force. The ruffians rudely seized her; and, in the heat of the encounter, drew the blood of a beauty, the sight of whose charms would have moved to pity even the tygers of Mount Emaus. The injured lady pierced the heavens with her cries; exclaiming—‘O my husband! my dear husband! They force me from the arms of him whom alone I adore!’ She regarded not her own danger; her thoughts were wholly engrossed by her fears for her dearly beloved Zadig. In the mean time, he defended himself with all the strength and resolution which love and valour usually inspire. Assisted only by two slaves, he put the villains to flight, and carried home Semira, senseless and bloody as she was. The moment she came to herself, she fixed her lovely eyes on her deliverer. ‘O Zadig!’ said she, ‘I not only love thee as my husband, but as him to whom I owe my life; and what to me is far dearer, the preservation of my honour.’ Never was a heart more enflamed than Semira’s; never did such ravishing lips express sentiments so kind and tender: her words were of fire; they were inspired by gratitude for the greatest of all benefits, and the warmest transports of a lawful affection. Her wounds were slight, and were quickly healed. Zadig was wounded in a more dangerous manner; he was struck by an arrow near his left-eye. Semira incessantly addressed the gods for the cure of her lover; her cheeks were night and day bathed in tears; and she waited with impatience for the happy moment when the eyes of Zadig should behold her anxiety! But, alas! the wounded eye became so swelled and enflamed, that his friends were in the greatest concern for his sight. They sent even to Memphis, for the great physician Hermes, who immediately attended his patient with a numerous retinue. On his first visit, he declared that Zadig would lose his eye, and predicted the day and hour when this fatal event would happen. ‘If it had been the right-eye,’

said he, ' I could have healed it ; but the wounds of ' the left are incurable.' All Babylon, while they lamented the destiny of Zadig, admired the wisdom of Hermes. Two days after, the abscess burst of itself; and Zadig, in a short time, was perfectly recovered. Hermes then wrote a very elaborate treatise, to prove that he ought not to have been cured : which Zadig, however, did not think worth his perusal ; but, as soon as he could go abroad, prepared to visit her on whom he founded his hopes of happiness, and for whose sake alone he had wished the restoration of his sight. Semira, he found, had been three days in the country ; and he was at the same time informed, that as this beautiful creature had publicly declared an insuperable aversion to one-eyed men, she was that very night to be wedded to Orcan. At this unexpected ill news, poor Zadig fell senseless on the earth ; and was so greatly affected with his disappointment, that it threw him into a violent illness, which lasted some months. At length reason prevailed over his affliction, and the reflection of the guilt he had experienced in her, served to give him consolation.

' Since I have suffered,' said he, ' the effects of such ' cruel caprice, from a woman educated at court, I ' will now wed the daughter of some substantial citizen.' Accordingly, he made choice of Azora, a young lady of genteel education, an excellent œconomist, and descended from parents the most respectable. Shortly after, they were married, and lived for a whole month in all the delights of the most tender union. But he soon began to perceive that Azora possessed some small degree of levity, and had a strong propensity to believe that those young men who had the most agreeable persons, were always the most virtuous and witty.

C H A P. II.

The Nose.

AZORA had been one day walking, when she returned filled with rage, and uttering loud exclamations. 'Why, O my dear wife! are you afflicted?' said he. 'Who has been able thus to disturb you?'—'Alas!' said she, 'you would have been equally enraged, had you seen what I have just beheld. I have been to comfort the young widow Cosrou, who has been these two days erecting a monument to the memory of her deceased husband, near the rivalet which runs by the side of this meadow. In the height of her grief, she made a solemn vow to stay at his tomb as long as the rivulet kept its course.'—'Well,' said Zadig, 'this woman is worthy of esteem; she loved her husband with perfect sincerity.'—'Ah!' replied Azora, 'did you know how she was employed, when I went to visit her, you would not say so.'—'How was it, lovely Azora?' said he; 'was she turning the stream of the rivulet?' Azora answered by long invectives; and uttered such bitter reproaches against the young widow, that Zadig was disgusted at her ostentation of virtue.

Zadig had an intimate friend named Cador, whose wife was perfectly virtuous and actually preferred her husband to all the world besides: this friend Zadig made his confident, and secured his fidelity by a considerable present.

Azora had been two days in the country, visiting one of her friends: at her return home, on the third, she was informed by her domesticks, who were all in tears, that Zadig died suddenly the night before; that they had not dared to carry her this fatal news; and that they had just buried him in the tomb of his fathers, at the end of the garden. She burst into a flood of tears, tore her hair, and vowed that she would immediately

follow him. In the evening Cador came, and begged to be permitted to condole with her; and they both joined their lamentations. The next day they wept less, and dined together; when Cador informed her, that Zadig had left him the greatest part of his wealth, and gave her to understand, that his happiness depended on her sharing his fortune. The lady again burst into tears; grew angry; and became reconciled. They sat longer at supper than they had done at dinner, and talked together with greater confidence. Azora was lavish in her encomiums on the deceased; but at the same time observed, that he had faults from which Cador was exempt. In the midst of their entertainment, Cador suddenly complained of a violent pain in his side. The lady, afflicted, and eager to serve him, ordered the essences of flowers and drugs to be brought; and with these she anointed him, to try if any of them would assuage his anguish: she was much concerned that the great Hermes was not still in Babylon, and condescended to lay her warm hand on the part affected. 'Are you subject to this tormenting malady?' said she, in a soft compassionate tone. 'Sometimes,' said Cador, 'I am so violently affected with it, that it brings me to the very brink of the grave: nor is there but a single remedy which can give me ease, and that is, to apply to my side the nose of a man lately dead.'— 'This is a strange remedy!' said Azora. 'Not more strange,' replied he, 'than the satchels of the great Arnou* against the apoplexy.'

This reason, added to the person and merit of the young man, at last determined her in his favour. 'After all,' said she, 'when my husband passes the bridge Tchimavar, the angel Asrail will not stop his passage, though his nose be somewhat shorter in

* There was at this time in Babylon, a famous doctor, named Arnou, who (in the Gazettes) cured apoplectick fits, and prevented them from affecting his patients, by hanging a little bag about their necks.

'the next life than it was in this.' She then took a razor, went to the tomb of her husband, bedewed it with her tears, and approached to cut off his nose, as he lay extended in his coffin. Zadig mounted in a moment, holding his nose with one hand, and putting back the instrument with the other. 'Azora,' said he, 'do not so loudly exclaim against the widow Cosrou; the project of cutting off my nose is equal to that of turning a rivulet.'

C H A P. III.

The Dog and the Horse.

ZADIG found by experience, that the first month of marriage, as it is written in the book of Zind, is the moon of honey; but that the second is the moon of wormwood. In short, he was some time after obliged to repudiate Azora, who became too hard to be pleased, and seek for happiness in the study of nature. 'None,' said he, 'can enjoy greater felicity than the philosopher, who judiciously peruses that spacious book which God has placed before his eyes. The truths he discovers become useful to himself: he nourishes and exalts his soul; lives in tranquillity; fears nothing from men; and has no tender spouse to cut off his nose.'

Filled with these ideas, he retired to a house in the country, that stood on the banks of the Euphrates. He did not there employ himself in calculating how many drops of water flow in a second of time under the arches of a bridge; or if there fell a cube-line of rain in the month of the Mousé, more than in the month of the Sheep. He formed no projects for making silk gloves and stockings with the webs of spiders, nor china-ware out of broken glass bottles; but he chiefly studied the properties of animals and plants; and was very soon, by his strict and repeated enquiries, enabled to discover a thousand variations in visible objects, that others, less curious, imagined all alike.

As he was one day walking by the side of a thicket, he saw one of the queen's eunuchs approaching towards him, followed by many officers, who appeared under the greatest perplexity, running here and there like persons almost distracted, and seeking with impatience something extremely precious. 'Young man,' said the first eunuch, 'have you seen the queen's dog?' Zadig coolly replied, 'You mean, I presume, her bitch?'—'You are in the right, sir!' returned the eunuch; 'it is a spaniel-bitch, indeed!'—'And very small,' said Zadig. 'She has lately whelped, she limps on the left-foot before, and has very long ears.'—'You have then seen her?' said the eunuch, quite out of breath. 'No,' answered Zadig, 'I have never seen her; nor do I know, but by you, that the queen had such a bitch.'

Just at this time, by one of the ordinary caprices of fortune, the finest horse in the king's stables had escaped from the groom, and got upon the plains of Babylon. The principal huntsman, and all the inferior officers, ran after him with as much concern as the first eunuch after the bitch. The principal huntsman addressed himself to Zadig, and asked, if he had not seen the king's horse run by. 'No horse,' replied Zadig, 'is a better runner; he is five feet high; his hoofs are very small; his tail is about three feet and a half long; the studs of his bit are of pure gold, about ~~twenty-three~~ carats; and his shoes are silver.'—'Which way did he run? where is he?' demanded the huntsman. 'I have never seen him,' replied Zadig; 'nor did I till now ever hear that the king had such a horse.'

The principal huntsman and the first eunuch, not doubting but that Zadig had stole the king's horse and the queen's bitch, immediately caused him to be conducted before the grand dethierham, who condemned him to the knout, and to be confined for life in some lonely and remote part of Siberia. Scarce was the sentence passed, when the horse and bitch were found. The

judges were then under the disagreeable necessity of reversing their decision; but they condemned him to pay four hundred ounces of gold, for having said that he had not seen what he had seen. This fine he was obliged to deposit in court: after which he was allowed to plead his cause before the council of the grand deſterham; when he ſpoke in theſe terms—

‘ Ye bright ſtars of juſtice, profound abyſs of ſciences, mirrors of truth! who have in you the weight of lead, the inflexibility of ſteel, the luſtre of the diamond, and the reſemblance of the pureſt gold! ſince I am permitted to ſpeak before this auguſt aſſembly, I ſwear by Oroſmades, that I have never ſeen the queen’s illuſtrious dog, nor the ſacred horſe of the king of kings. I will, however, be ingenuous enough to declare the truth, and nothing but the truth. As I was walking by the ſide of the thicket, where I afterwards met the venerable eunuch, and the moſt illuſtrious huntsman, I ſaw on the ſand the traces of an animal, and eaſily judged they were thoſe of a little dog. The light and long furrows impreſſed on ſmall eminences of ſand, between the marks of the paws, made me know that it was a bitch, whoſe dugs were hanging down, and that ſhe had therefore lately whelped. As I obſerved, likewise, other traces of a different kind, which ſeemed to have grazed the ſurface of the ſand, on the ſides of the marks of the fore feet, I eaſily judged that ſhe had very long ears. And as I remarked, that there was a fainter impreſſion made on the ſand by one foot than by the three others, I concluded that the bitch of our auguſt queen was, if I may be permitted ſo to ſay, a little lame.

‘ With reſpect to the horſe of the king of kings, give me leave to inform you, that as I was walking down the lane by the thicket-ſide, I took particular notice of the prints made upon the ſand by a horſe’s ſhoes, and found they were all at equal diſtances;

‘ from which observation, I concluded the horse galloped well. The dust on the trees, in a straight road, seven feet wide, was brushed off a little both on the right and the left, at three feet and a half from the middle of the road. This horse, said I, has a tail three feet and a half long, which, by it’s being whisked to the right and the left, swept away the dust. Again, I perceived under the trees, which formed a kind of arbour five feet high, that the leaves were newly fallen, and was sensible the horse must have shook them off; I therefore judged him to be somewhat more than five feet high. As to the bits of his bridle, I knew they must be of gold of twenty-three carats, for he rubbed the studs against a certain stone which I knew to be a touch-stone, and which I have tried. To conclude, I have judged, by the marks which his shoes left on flints of a different kind, that he was shod with silver.’

All the judges were astonished at the profound and subtle discernment of Zadig. The news reached even the king and queen. Nothing was spoke of but Zadig, in the anti-chambers, in the chambers, and in the cabinet: and though many of the magi were of opinion he ought to be burnt as a forcerer, the king ordered that the four hundred ounces of gold he had been obliged to pay, should be restored to him again. The register and other officers then went to his house with great formality, to carry him his four hundred ounces: they kept back only three hundred, fourscore, and eighteen, for the expences of justice; and their servants demanded their fees.

Zadig saw how dangerous it sometimes is to appear too wise; and he firmly resolved, in future, to set a watch before the door of his lips.

An opportunity soon offered for the trial of his resolution. A prisoner of state having made his escape, passed under his window. Zadig was examined, but made no answer; however, as it was proved that he had looked at him from his window, he was condemn-

ed to pay five hundred ounces of gold for this crime; and, according to the custom of Babylon, thank the judges for their indulgence. ‘Good God!’ said he to himself, ‘what a misfortune is this to walk near a wood through which the queen’s dog and the king’s horse have passed! how dangerous is it to look out of a window! and, in a word, how difficult for a man to be truly happy in this life!’

C H A P. IV.

The envious Man.

AS Zadig had met with such a series of misfortunes, he resolved to comfort himself by the study of philosophy, and the conversation of select friends. He had in the suburbs of Babylon a house adorned with much taste, where he assembled all the arts and all the pleasures worthy the attention of a good man. In the morning his library was open to the learned; in the evening, his table was surrounded by good company: but he soon found the danger there is in conversing with the sons of science. There arose a great dispute on one of the laws of Zoroaster, which forbids the eating of griffins. ‘How should he prohibit our eating a griffin,’ said one of the company, ‘if this animal has no existence?’—‘It must necessarily exist,’ said the others, ‘since Zoroaster will not allow it to be eaten.’ Zadig strove to make them agree, by saying—‘If, gentlemen, there are griffins, let us not eat them; if there are no such things, we cannot eat them; and thus we shall all obey Zoroaster.’

A learned man, who had composed thirteen volumes on the properties of the griffin, hasted to accuse Zadig before one of the principal magi, named Yebor, the most foolish, and the greatest bigot of all the Chaldeans. This man would have impaled Zadig to do honor to the sun, and when he had done it, would have recited the breviary of Zoroaster with greater satis-

faction. His friend Cador (a friend of more value than a hundred magi) went to old Yebor, and said to him—‘ Long live the sun and the griffins! take care of punishing Zadig, for he is a saint; he has griffins in his inner court, and does not eat them; and his accuser is an heretick, who dares to maintain that rabbits have cloven feet and are not unclean.’—‘ Well,’ said Yebor, shaking his bald pate, ‘ we must impale Zadig for having spoken disrespectfully of griffins, and the other for having spoken contemptuously of rabbits.’ Cador, however, put a stop to the affair, by means of a maid of honor, by whom he had a child, and who had great credit in the college of the magi; so that nobody was punished: whereupon many of the doctors murmured, and presaged the ruin of Babylon. Zadig said to himself—‘ On what does happiness depend? I am persecuted by every thing in this world, even on account of beings that have no existence.’ He cursed the sons of learning, and for the future resolved to keep none but good company. He now assembled at his house the most worthy men in Babylon, and ladies of the greatest beauty; he gave them delicate suppers, frequently preceded by concerts of musick, and always animated by the most engaging conversation, in which he carefully avoided the desire of appearing witty; well knowing that to be a sure method of defeating it’s own end, as well as of spoiling the most agreeable company. Neither the choice of his friends, nor that of his provisions, were the result of pride or ostentation. He delighted in appearing what he was, and not in seeming what he was not; by which means he obtained a far more respectable character than that which he actually aimed at.

Opposite to his house dwelt Arimazes, a person puffed up with pride; who having never been able to obtain so much success in life as he wished for, sought to revenge himself by railing against all mankind. Although he was rich, he found it difficult to procure flatterers. He was greatly provoked at the rattling of

the chariots which approached the door of Zadig; but was still more aggravated by the sound of his praises. He sometimes intruded himself so far as to sit down at Zadig's table without any invitation, and when there he constantly interrupted the mirth of the company, as harpies are said to corrupt all the provisions they touch.

Arimazes one day intended to give an entertainment to a young lady; but instead of accepting it, she went to sup at Zadig's. Another time, as Zadig and he were conversing together in the palace, a minister of state came up, and invited Zadig to supper, but took no notice of Arimazes. The most implacable hatred has seldom a more solid foundation. This person, who in Babylon was called the Envious Man, resolved to ruin Zadig, because he was usually distinguished by the appellation of the Happy Man. An opportunity of doing mischief is found an hundred times in a day, but that of doing good only once in a year; as says the wise Zoroaster.

Arimazes went one day to see Zadig, who was walking in his garden with two friends and a lady, to whom he said abundance of fine things, without any other intention than the innocent pleasure of saying them. The conversation turned on a war the king had just happily concluded against the prince of Hircania his vassal. Zadig, who had signalized his courage in this short struggle, bestowed great praises on the king, but was still more lavish in his compliments to the lady; and taking out his pocket-book, instantly wrote four lines, which he gave her to look at. His friends then begged to see them; but modesty, or rather a just degree of self-love, prevented him; for he knew that extempore verses are seldom good, except in the opinion of those in honour of whom they are written. He therefore broke in two the tablet on which he had been writing, and threw both pieces into a thicket of roses, where his friends sought for them in vain. A small rain falling presently after, all the

company, except Arimazes, returned to the house. He, however, continued in the garden, and sought till he found a piece of the tablet. It had been unfortunately torn in such a manner, that each half of a line formed a compleat sense, and even a verse in a very short measure; and by a chance still more strange, the lines were found to contain most injurious reproaches against the king. They ran thus—

By crimes of blackest dye,
He's of the throne possess'd,
To peace and liberty,
The enemy profess'd.

Arimazes was now happy, for the first time in his life; since he had in his hands the means of destroying one who was worthy and virtuous. Filled with a cruel joy, he produced the broken tablet, which contained this virulent satire, before the king; who ordered Zadig to be imprisoned, together with the lady and his two friends. His trial was soon over, without his being suffered to speak for himself. When he came to receive his sentence, the envious man threw himself in his way, and told him aloud, that his verses were of no value. Zadig was but little displeased at being thought a bad poet, but he could not bear the reflection of being condemned for high treason, and considering that a beautiful lady, and two of his friends, were detained in prison for a crime of which they were entirely innocent. He was not permitted to speak, because his writing spoke: such were the laws of Babylon. They obliged him therefore to go to punishment through a crowd of spectators, brought together by their curiosity, none of whom durst appear to pity him: they threw themselves before him to examine his countenance, and to see if he acted with a becoming fortitude. His relations were, indeed, the only real mourners; for they could not inherit his estate. Three

parts of his substance were confiscated to the king's use, and the other was given to Arimazes.

Just as Zadig was preparing himself for death, the king's parrot flew from her cage, and alighted on a rose bush in the garden of Zadig. A peach had been driven thither by the wind from a neighbouring tree, and was fallen on a piece of the tablet, to which it stuck; when the bird carried it away, and alighted on the monarch's knee. The king, seized with curiosity, read the words on the broken tablet, which formed not any meaning, but appeared to be the endings of a verse. He was a great admirer of poetry; and there is always some relief to be expected, when a prince is a friend to the muses: the adventure of his parrot made him thoughtful. The queen, who perfectly well remembered what had been written on the piece of Zadig's pocket-book, ordered that part to be brought. They examined the two pieces together, which perfectly fitted each other; and then read the verse as Zadig had wrote it—

By crimes of blackest dye, I've seen the earth made hell;
He's of the throne possess'd, who all their pow'r can quell,
To peace and liberty, love's now the only foe,
The enemy profess'd of mortals here below.

Upon this the king ordered Zadig to be instantly brought before him, and his two friends and the lady to be immediately released from their confinement. Zadig prostrated himself with his face to the earth before the king and queen, and most humbly begged pardon for having made an ill verse. He spoke, indeed, with such a becoming grace, and with so much modesty and good sense, that the king and queen desired to see him again; when they gave him all the wealth of Arimazes, by whom he had been so unjustly accused: but Zadig generously restored him back the whole of his fortune. Arimazes, however, felt no other sensation, than the pleasure which arose from his not having lost his substance. The king's esteem for

Zadig increased from day to day; he made him share in all his pleasures, and consulted him in all his affairs. The queen from that time shewed him so much respect, and spoke to him in such soft and endearing terms, that it seemed to threaten much danger to herself, her royal consort, to Zadig, and to the kingdom. Zadig now began to believe, that the attainment of happiness was not so difficult as he has formerly imagined.

CHAP. V.

The Force of Generosity.

THE time now arrived for celebrating a great feast, held once in five years. It was a custom in Babylon, solemnly to declare, at the end of this period, which of the citizens had done the most generous action.

The grandees and magi always sat as judges on this occasion; and the first satrape, who had the care of the city, made known the most noble actions that had passed under his government. They proceeded by votes, and the king himself pronounced the judgment. Persons of all ranks and degrees came to this solemnity from the most remote parts of the kingdom. The successful person received from the hands of the monarch a gold cup, adorned with precious stones; and the king said these words—‘Receive this reward of your generosity; and may the gods grant me many thousands of such valuable subjects!’

On this memorable day, when the king appeared on his throne, surrounded by his grandees, the magi, and the deputies of all the surrounding nations who came to these games, where glory was acquired, not by the swiftness of horses, nor by strength and activity of body, but by virtue; the principal satrape reported, with a loud voice, such noble acts as might seem to entitle their authors to this inestimable reward: but never mentioned the greatness of soul with which Zadig had restored to the envious man the possession of

his fortune; this was not an action that deserved to dispute the prize.

He first presented a judge, who having made a citizen lose a considerable cause, by a mistake for which he was no way responsible, had made restitution out of his own private fortune.

He next produced a young man, who being desperately in love with a damsel he was going to marry, yielded her up to his friend; whose passion for her had almost brought him to his grave; and, on parting with the damsel, gave also a portion with her.

He afterwards produced a soldier, who in the wars of Hircania had furnished a still greater example of generosity. The enemy had taken from him his mistress; but while he was fighting in his defence, he was informed that other Hircanians, at some paces distant, were carrying away his mother: he then quit-
ted his mistress with tears, and ran to deliver his parent. At length he returned to her he loved, and found her just expiring: upon which he resolved to die with her, and was about to plunge a dagger in his own breast; but his mother remonstrating, that she had no other support nor protection but him, he had the courage to resolve to live.

The judges seemed disposed to declare in favour of the soldier, when the king spoke thus—‘ This action, and those of the others, are truly great; but they do not fill me with surprise. Zadig yesterday performed one that has raised my astonishment. I had for some days disgraced Coreb, my prime minister and favourite. I complained of his conduct in violent and bitter terms; when all my courtiers assured me that I was too mild, and loaded him with the most reproachful invectives. I asked Zadig his opinion of Coreb, and he dared to give him the noblest of characters. I must own, that I have seen in our histories, examples of persons who have paid their own fortunes to atone for an error; of those who resigned a mistress; and who have preferred a mother

‘to a woman tenderly beloved; but never had I read
 ‘of a courtier who has spoken favourably of a fallen
 ‘minister, the object of his sovereign’s anger. I give
 ‘to each of those, whose generous actions have been
 ‘just recited, twenty thousand pieces of gold, but the
 ‘cup I give to Zadig.’

‘O king!’ said Zadig, ‘it is your majesty alone
 ‘who deserves the cup; you alone have acted in the
 ‘most noble and uncommon manner; since you, who
 ‘are so great a king, was not offended at your slave,
 ‘when he opposed your passion.’ The whole assembly
 gazed with admiration both on the king and Zadig.
 The judge who had generously atoned his error, the
 lover who had resigned his mistress to his friend, the
 soldier who had preferred the safety of his mother to
 that of his mistress, received the monarch’s presents,
 and saw their names written in the book of generous
 actions: Zadig had the cup; and the king acquired
 the reputation of a good prince, which he did not long
 enjoy. This day was celebrated by feasts which con-
 tinued longer than the law prescribed; tragedies were
 represented that made the audience burst into tears, and
 comedies that excited laughter, both of which were
 very unusual in Babylon; and the memory thereof is
 still preserved in Asia. ‘Now,’ said Zadig, ‘I am
 ‘at length completely happy.’ He was, however,
 most egregiously mistaken.

CHAP. VI.

The just Judge.

NOtwithstanding Zadig’s youth, he was established
 supreme judge of all the tribunals throughout
 the empire. He discharged this office, as a man whom
 God had endued with the strictest justice, and the most
 solid wisdom. It was from him the surrounding na-
 tions received this grand principle, that it is much
 better to run the hazard of a spring the guilty, than
 be liable to condemn the innocent: and it was his firm

opinion, that the laws were intended to honour those who did well, as much as to be a terror to the wicked. His principal talent consisted in discovering truth, which most men seek to obscure. On the first day of his administration he exerted this peculiar talent. A rich merchant of Babylon died in the Indies, who had made his two sons joint heirs, as soon as they should dispose of their sister in marriage; and moreover, left a legacy of thirty thousand pieces of gold to that son who should be proved to have loved him best. The eldest erected a superb monument to his memory; the second increased his sister's portion, by giving her a part of his inheritance. Upon which every body said, that the eldest best loved his father, and the youngest his sister; and that, therefore, the thirty thousand pieces ought to be given the eldest.

The cause came before Zadig, who examined them apart. To the eldest he said—'Your father is not yet dead; he is cured of his illness, and is on his return to Babylon.'—'God be praised!' replied the young man; 'but his tomb cost me a considerable sum!' Zadig afterwards said the same to the youngest; who immediately replied—'God be praised! I will go and restore to my father all I have; but I hope he will not insist upon what I have given my sister.'—'You shall restore nothing,' said Zadig, 'and shall have the thirty thousand pieces: you are the man who best loves his father.'

A young lady, who was very rich, had promised herself in marriage to two magi; and, after having for some months received instructions from both, discovered herself to be with child. Each of them was desirous of marrying her. 'I will take him for my husband,' said she, 'who has put me in a condition to give a citizen to my country.'—'It is I, Madam, who have answered that valuable end,' said the one: 'It is I who have had this advantage,' said the other. 'Well,' replied she, 'I will acknowledge for the infant's father him who can give it the best education.'

In a short time after, she was delivered of a son. Each of them insisted on being it's tutor; and the cause was brought before Zadig. When the magi came before him, he said to the first—'What will you teach your pupil?'—'I will teach him,' replied the doctor, 'the eight parts of speech, logick, astrology, and magic; what is meant by substance and accident, the abstract and the concrete, &c. &c.' When the second was asked the same question—'I will do my utmost,' said he, 'to make him an honest man, and to render him worthy of having many friends.' Upon this, Zadig cried—'Whether you are the father or not, you shall marry the mother.'

Complaints every day reached court against the itimadoulet of Media, whose name was Irax. He was a person of great rank and fortune, and naturally possessed a good disposition; but had corrupted his mind, and squandered away great part of his estate, in the constant pursuit of vain and expensive pleasures. He seldom permitted an inferior to speak to him; and no person whatever dared to oppose his will. He was as vain as the peacock, as voluptuous as the pigeon, and as sluggish and inactive as the tortoise. In short, he made false glory, and false pleasures, his own pursuits.

Zadig undertook his cure: he accordingly sent him, in the king's name, a master of musick, with twelve singers, and twenty-four musicians; and a steward of the house, with six cooks and four chamberlains, who were never to quit his presence. The king's order was, that the following particulars should be inviolably observed; and thus the business proceeded—

The first morning, as soon as the voluptuous Irax awaked, the musick-master entered, followed by the vocal and instrumental musicians, who performed a cantata that lasted two hours and three minutes; in which the following lines were every three minutes repeated—

In vain our feeble pow'rs we raise,
To sing thy valour, wisdom, worth;
Far, far beyond all human praise,
Thy virtues soar, most blest on earth.

When the cantata was ended, a chamberlain made an oration three quarters of an hour long, in which he particularly praised him for all the good qualities he wanted. The speech being ended, they conducted him to table by the sound of instruments. The dinner lasted three hours, before he condescended to speak: as soon as he opened his mouth for that purpose, the first chamberlain said he was in the right; scarce had he pronounced four words, when the second chamberlain cried—‘Sir, you are perfectly right!’ The other two chamberlains employed themselves in laughing heartily at every smart thing Irax had said, or seemed willing to say, and were lavish in their praises of his wit. After dinner, the adulating chorus was repeated.

The first day Irax was in raptures, and he thought the king of kings paid a proper attention to his merit; the second seemed less agreeable; the third was somewhat troublesome; the fourth insupportable; and the fifth tormenting. In short, disturbed at hearing them always singing—‘In vain our feeble pow'rs we raise,’ with hearing them continually say he was in the right, and at being harangued every day at the same hour, he wrote to court to beseech the king to recal his chamberlains, his musicians, his stewards of the household, and his cooks; and promised, in the most submissive manner, to be less vain, and apply himself more closely to business. From this time he grew less fond of adulation, and had fewer feasts, though he was yet more happy; for, as it is said by Sadder—‘Always pleasure, is no pleasure.’

Scarcely a day passed wherein Zadig did not exhibit some fresh proof of his amazing penetration, and ex-

treme goodness of heart ; he was adored by the people, and beloved by the king : even the first misfortunes of his life served to augment his present felicity. Every night, however, he had a dream which filled him with uneasiness. He imagined that he laid himself down on a heap of dry herbs, among which there were prickly ones that greatly incommoded him ; and that afterwards he reposed himself in the softest manner on a bed of roses, from whence there proceeded a serpent, which wounded him to the heart with it's sharp and envenomed tooth. ' Alas ! ' said he, ' I have long laid on these dry and prickly herbs ; I am now on the bed of roses ; but what shall be the serpent ? '

C H A P. VII.

The Force of Jealousy.

THE misfortunes of Zadig proceeded in a great measure from his preferment, but more particularly from his merit. He every day conversed with the king and his august consort ; and the charms of his conversation were redoubled by that desire of pleasing which is to the mind what dress is to beauty. The youth and graceful deportment of Zadig had a much greater influence on Astarte than she readily perceived ; and her bosom continually nourished an affection of which she was by no means conscious. She freely, and without scruple, indulged the pleasure of seeing and conversing with a man who was not only dear to her husband, but to the whole empire. She was continually speaking in his praise to the king ; and he was the whole subject of her conversation among her women, whose eulogiums of him even exceeded her own. In short, every thing served to sink into the heart of Astarte the arrow which to her was imperceptible. She made presents to Zadig, in which there was more of gallantry than she imagined ; she thought only of speaking to him like a queen pleased with his

services, but her expressions did not unfrequently resemble those of a woman in love.

Astarte was far more beautiful than Semira, who had such a hatred for one-eyed men; or his late affectionate spouse, who had been willing to cut off his nose. The pleasing familiarity of Astarte; her tender expressions, which sometimes crimsoned her cheeks; and the delicate glances of her eyes, which in spite of herself were continually fixed upon his; all conspired to light up a fire in the heart of Zadig, at which he was himself amazed. He endeavoured to extinguish it, by calling to his assistance that philosophy which had hitherto been his support; but drew nothing from this source but empty knowledge, without any real consolation.

Duty, gratitude, and violated majesty, presented themselves to his mind as avenging deities; he struggled bravely with his passions, and at length gained the victory; this conquest, however, which he was obliged every moment to re-obtain, cost him many sighs and tears. He now durst not speak to the queen with that delightful freedom which had hitherto proved but too agreeable to them both: his eyes were veiled with a mist; his discourse was unconnected, and had the appearance of constraint; he endeavoured to look another way, that he might not behold the queen; and when, contrary to his wishes, his eyes met those of Astarte, he found that her's, though bathed in tears, were capable of darting forth arrows of flame: they seemed, in short, silently to intimate, that they were afraid of being in love with each other, and that both burned with a fire which both condemned.

Zadig left her presence with a mind unsettled and dismayed; and his heart was oppressed with a burden too great for him to bear. Amidst the violence of his agitations he disclosed to Cadour the secrets of his heart; just as a man who, having long supported the fits of a violent disease, makes his anguish known by a

ery which it's redoubled sharpness forces from him, and by the cold sweats which hang on his brow.

'I have already discovered,' said Cador, 'the sensations you would fain have concealed from yourself; the passions shew themselves by signs which will not suffer us to be mistaken. Judge, my dear Zadig, since I have read your heart, whether the king will not discover a sensation so offensive to him. He has no other fault than that of being the most jealous of mankind. You will resist your passion with greater strength than the queen will combat her's, not only because you are a philosopher, but because you are Zadig. Astarte is a woman; and suffers her looks to speak with the more imprudence, as she does not believe herself to be yet guilty. Conscious of the innocency of her heart, she is by much too unguarded. I tremble for her, because she hath nothing with which to reproach herself. Were you both agreed, you might deceive the whole world: a rising passion, which is smothered, breaks out into a flame; but love, when once gratified, knows how to conceal itself with art.' Zadig shuddered at the proposal of violating the bed of his royal benefactor; nor was there ever a more faithful subject, though guilty of this involuntary crime. The queen, however, so often pronounced the name of Zadig, with her face covered with blushes; she was sometimes so animated, at others so much depressed, when she spoke of him in the presence of her husband, and was seized with so deep a thoughtfulness when he was absent, that the king became extremely uneasy. He believed all that he saw, and imagined all that he did not see. He more particularly remarked, that the queen's sandals were blue, and that those of Zadig were of the same colour; that her ribbands were yellow, and that Zadig's turban was also yellow. These were terrible prognosticks for a prince of his delicacy to reflect on. In a mind so dis-tempered as his, suspicions became as facts.

The slaves of kings and queens are so many spies

over their hearts. It was soon discovered by them, that Altarte was tender, and Moabdar jealous. Ari-mazes had not corrected his envious disposition; for flints never soften, and venomous animals always preserve their poison. This wretch sent an anonymous letter to Moabdar: the infamous recourse of a sordid mind, and which is always the object of contempt; but at this time it had the intended effect, because it seconded the fatal sentiments that possessed the prince's heart. In short he no longer thought of any thing besides the manner of his revenge. He one night resolved to poison the queen, and to make Zadig die by the bow-string; his revenge was to be executed at break of day, and the order was given to a merciless eunuch, the ready executioner of his vengeance. There was, at this time, a little dwarf in the king's chamber, who was dumb, but not deaf. He was suffered to go where he pleased; and was a witness of whatever passed in secret, without being more suspected than any domestick animal. This little dwarf had an extraordinary affection both for the queen and Zadig. He heard, with equal horror and surprize, the orders given for their death; but how to prevent those orders from being put in execution, as the time was so short, was his principal concern. It is true he could not write; but then he had learned to draw, and knew how to form a resemblance. Accordingly, he spent part of the night in delineating on a piece of paper what he wished to inform the queen. His design represented the king agitated with fury, who stood in a corner of the picture, giving orders to his eunuch; a bow-string and a cup were placed on a table; and in the midst of the picture was the queen expiring in the arms of her women, and Zadig strangled at her feet. In the horizon he represented a rising sun, to shew that this horrible execution was to be performed by break of day. As soon as he had finished this piece, he ran to one of Altarte's women, awaked her, and made her understand that she was that very instant to carry it to the queen,

In the middle of the night there was a knocking at Zadig's door; he was awaked, and a note presented him from the queen; he doubted whether he was not in a dream, and opened the letter with a trembling hand: but what was his surprize, and who can exprets his consternation and despair, when he read these words — ‘Fly, dear Zadig, at this very instant, in which they are going to take away your life! Fly, I conjure you, in the name of that fatal passion with which I have long struggled and which I at last confess, when on the point of expiating it by my death. Although I am not conscious of having committed any crime, I find that I am doomed to suffer as a traitor.’

Zadig had scarce power to speak. He ordered his friend Cador to be called, and gave him the paper without uttering a word. Cador pressed him to obey the contents, and immediately take the road to Memphis. ‘If you should dare go in search of the queen,’ said he, ‘you will hasten her death; if you should speak to the king, you will infallibly ruin her. I will myself endeavour to avert the stroke which threatens her; it will be sufficient for you to provide for your own safety.’ It shall be instantly spread abroad, that you are gone to the Indies; and as soon as the pursuit of you shall be given up, I will follow after, and inform you of every occurrence.’

Cador immediately ordered two of the swiftest dromedaries to be ready at one of the private doors of the palace, and made Zadig mount that which was to carry him, though he was scarce able to sit up. He had but one trusty servant to attend him; and Cador, overwhelmed with grief, in a few moments lost sight of his friend.

This illustrious fugitive, having reached the summit of a hill from whence he might take a view of Babylon, turned his eyes towards the queen's palace, and immediately fainted away: when he recovered his senses, his cheeks were bathed with tears, and he eagerly wished for death. At length, having employed his

thoughts in contemplating the deplorable fate of the most amiable woman and greatest queen upon earth, he for a moment turned his views on himself, and exclaimed — 'What, then, is human life! O virtue, virtue! what hast thou availed me! I have been basely betrayed by two females: yet a third, who is innocent, and ten thousand times more lovely, is on the point of being murdered for her partiality to me. Whatever good I have done, has been to me a constant source of disappointment and misery: I have been only raised to the height of grandeur, that my fall might be the greater down the horrible precipice of misfortune. Had I been as wicked and abandoned as others, I should, like them, have been happy!' With a mind agitated by these fatal reflections, his eyes covered with the veil of grief, the paleness of death on his countenance, and his soul plunged in the blackest despair, he continued his journey towards Egypt.

C H A P. VIII.

The Wife beaten.

ZADIG directed his course by the stars. The constellation Orion, and the shining Dog-star, guided him towards the pole of Canopæa. He reflected with admiration on those vast globes of light which appear to our eyes no more than faint sparks; while the earth, which in reality is but an imperceptible point in nature, seems to our fond imaginations far more great and noble. He then reflected on the whole race of mankind, and considered them, truly, as insects that devour each other on an atom of earth. This idea seemed greatly to alleviate his misfortunes, by making him retrace the nothingness of his own being, and even that of Babylon. His capacious soul now soared into infinity, and contemplated, while detached from her earthly partner, the immutable order of the universe. But the moment he returned to himself, and again searched into his own heart, he began to consider that

Astarte might possibly have died for him: the universe vanished from his sight, and he beheld nothing throughout all nature but Astarte dying, and Zadig unfortunate. As he gave himself up to this flux and reflux of sublime philosophy and distressing sorrow, he insensibly arrived on the frontiers of Egypt; and his faithful attendant was already in the first hamlet, seeking a lodging. Zadig, in the mean time, approached the surrounding gardens, when he saw, at a small distance from the highway, a woman in tears, calling heaven and earth to her assistance, and a man in a violent rage pursuing after her. He now came up with her, and she fell prostrate before him, imploring his forgiveness; but he gave her only blows and reproaches. By the violence of the Egyptian, and the reiterated entreaties for pardon uttered by the lady, Zadig judged that the one was jealous, and the other unfaithful. But when he beheld the exquisite beauty of the woman, and considered that she bore some little resemblance to the unhappy Astarte, he felt himself filled with compassion for her and horror for the Egyptian. 'For Heaven's sake, Sir, assist me!' cried she to Zadig, with the deepest sighs; 'deliver me from the hands of the most barbarous man living! Save me; save my life!' At these words Zadig ran to throw himself between the lady and this barbarian; and as he had some knowledge of the Egyptian language, said to him, in that tongue—'Dear Sir, if you have any humanity, let me beg you to pay some regard to her beauty and weakness: how can you be so enraged at the masterpiece of nature, who lies at your feet, and has no defence but her tears?'—'Ah, ha?' cried the jealous man, 'you are, I suppose, one of her admirers, and I will be revenged on you this moment.' So saying, he left the lady, whom he had before held by the hair; and, taking his lance, attempted to wound the stranger. Zadig, however, who was in cool blood, easily avoided the blow aimed by the enraged Egyptian, and seized the lance near the point. One strove to draw it back, the

other to wrest it from him; and, in the scuffle, it broke in their hands. The Egyptian then drew his sabre; and Zadig arming himself with his, they attacked each other. This gave a hundred precipitate blows; that warded them off with address. Meanwhile the lady sat on the ground, adjusting her head-dress, and looking at the combatants. The Egyptian was more robust than his adversary, but Zadig was the most expert. This acted like a person whose arm was conducted by his judgment; that like a man whose passion made him fight at random. In short, Zadig soon closed, and disarmed him; and while the Egyptian became more furious, and attempted to throw himself upon him, he laid fast hold of him, pressed him close, threw him down, and holding his sword to his breast, offered him his life. The Egyptian, fired with rage, drew his poignard, and wounded the conqueror at the very instant he granted him his pardon; upon which, Zadig instantly plunged his sabre into his bosom, and the Egyptian, with an horrible cry, gave up the ghost. Zadig then advanced towards the lady, and said, with a submissive voice—
'He has forced me to kill him; I have revenged your cause; and you are now delivered from the most furious man I have ever seen: what more would you have me do for you?'—'Die, villain!' she replied;
'I would have you die: you have killed my lover, and I wish I was able to tear out your cruel heart!'—
'You had, indeed, a strange kind of lover!' replied Zadig: 'he beat you with all his strength; and would have taken away my life, because you intreated me to assist you!'—'I wish he had beat me still,' replied the lady, weeping bitterly; 'I well deserved it, for I had made him jealous. Would to Heaven he was now beating me, and that you was in his situation!' Zadig, more surprized and angry than he had ever been in his life, said—'Madam, notwithstanding your beauty, you merit that I should beat you in my turn; but I disdain to concern myself farther about you!' Upon this he remounted his dromedary, and advanced to-

wards the town. Scarce had he began to set forwards, when he turned back at the noise made by four couriers of Babylon, who came riding full speed. One of them seeing the woman, cried—‘It is she herself; she answers the description given us.’ They took no notice of the dead man, but immediately seized the lady; who incessantly cried out to Zadig—‘Help me once more, generous stranger; deliver me from these ruffians: I humbly beg pardon for my late ungrateful behaviour; help me, and I will be your’s for ever!’ Zadig, however, had no inclination to fight in her defence. ‘Apply to some other for assistance,’ replied he; ‘you shall not again make me the dupe of your artifice.’ Indeed, Zadig’s wound bled so fast, that he had himself need of assistance; and the sight of four Babylonians, probably from King Moabdar, gave him much concern. He therefore hastened towards the town; at a loss to conceive why four couriers from Babylon should take this Egyptian woman, but still more puzzled to account for her very strange behaviour.

C H A P. IX.

Slavery.

THE moment Zadig entered the place, he was surrounded by the people. Every one said—‘This is the man that carried away the beautiful Mislouf, and assassinated Cletofis.’—God preserve me, said he, from ever carrying away your beautiful Mislouf! She is too capricious for me: and as to Cletofis, I have not assassinated him; I have only killed him in my own defence. He endeavoured to take away my life, because I begged him to shew mercy to the lovely Mislouf, whom he was cruelly beating. I am a stranger, fled hither for shelter; and there is but little likelihood, that on coming to entreat your protection, I should begin with carrying away a lady, and assassinating her lover.’

The Egyptians, at that time, were just and humane.

The people conducted Zadig to a house in the town; and having dressed his wound, he and his domestick were examined apart, in order to discover the truth. They acquitted Zadig of the crime of wilful murder; but as he had been guilty of taking away the life of a man, though in his own defence, the law condemned him to be a slave. His two dromedaries were immediately sold, for the benefit of the town; they divided amongst the inhabitants the gold he had brought; and his person was exposed to sale in the market place, together with that of his servant. They were bought by an Arabian merchant, named Setoc; and the servant being best adapted for fatigue, was sold at a much higher price than his master: indeed, there was no comparison between them. Zadig was therefore a slave subordinate to his servant; they were linked together by a chain fastened to their feet, and in this condition they followed the Arabian merchant. Zadig, in the mean time, comforted his companion; exhorted him to patience; and, according to his usual custom, made reflections on human life. 'I see,' said he, 'that the unhappiness of my destiny has an effect on yours. Every thing in which I have had any concern, has hitherto been strangely conducted. I have been condemned to pay a fine for having seen the traces left by the feet of a dog; I have suffered the fear of being impaled on account of a griffin; I have been sent to execution for making verses in praise of the king; I have been on the point of being strangled, because the queen hath spoke to me with mildness; and here I am a slave with you, because a brutish fellow has beat his mistress. Let us, however, be chearful, and not lose our courage; all this, perhaps, will have an end. If it be necessary for the Arabian merchants to have slaves, why should not I be one as well as another, since I am also a man. Probably this merchant will not be void of pity: it is requisite for him to treat his slaves well, if he would reap much advantage from them.' This was the form of his

words; but his thoughts were wholly employed about the fate of the queen of Babylon.

Two days after, the merchant set out for Arabia Deserta, with his slaves and camels. His tribe dwelt near the desert of Oreb; and the way was long and painful. Setoc, while on the road, set more value on the servant than the master, because the first was more expert in loading his camels; and all the little marks of distinction were in his favour. A camel happening to die within two days journey of Oreb, his burden was divided, and placed on the backs of his slaves. Setoc smiled at seeing them walk stooping forward; and Zadig took the liberty of explaining the cause, by informing him of the laws of the balance. The merchant, astonished at his philosophical discourse, began now to look upon him with a very different eye; and Zadig, finding that he had excited his curiosity, redoubled it, by informing him of many things not foreign to commerce; the specific gravity of metals, and other commodities of various kinds under an equal bulk; the properties of several useful animals, and the means of rendering those that were not so fit for service. In short, he appeared to Setoc as a sage, and was esteemed by him far more valuable than his companion; he accordingly treated him with the utmost kindness, and never had the smallest cause to repent his indulgence.

Setoc being arrived among his own tribe, demanded payment of five hundred ounces of silver, which he had lent to a Jew in the presence of two witnesses; but the witnesses being dead, and the Jew satisfied of the impossibility of proving the debt, he looked on the money to be his own, and thanked God for having enabled him safely to defraud an Arabian. Setoc told his uneasiness to Zadig, who was now his chief confidant. 'Where,' said Zadig, 'did you lend the money to this infidel?'—'On a large stone near Mount Oreb,' replied the merchant. 'What is the character of your debtor?' said Zadig. 'That of a notorious villain,' replied Setoc. 'But I ask,' said Zadig,

‘whether he be lively or phlegmatick, cautious or imprudent.’—‘He is the worst pay-master in the world,’ said Setoc, ‘but the most lively and merriest fellow I ever knew.’—‘Well,’ said Zadig, ‘permit me to plead your cause.’ Accordingly Setoc consented; and Zadig having cited the Jew to appear, spoke thus before the Judge—‘Pillar of the throne of equity, I come to demand of this man, in the name of my master, five hundred ounces of silver, which he refuses to pay him.’—‘Have you any witnesses to prove the debt?’ said the judge. ‘No,’ repeated Zadig; ‘they are both dead: but there yet remains a large stone on which the money was counted; and if it pleases your excellence to order the stone to be sought for, I doubt not but it will prove a sufficient evidence. The Jew and I will wait here till it arrives, and the expence of bringing it shall be defrayed by my master.’—‘Your request is but reasonable,’ replied the Judge; ‘do as you propose.’ He then proceeded to other business.

When the court was about to break up, the judge addressed Zadig—‘Well,’ said he, ‘is your stone yet come?’ The Jew, sneering, replied—‘Should your excellence wait here till to-morrow, you would not even then see the stone; for it is above six miles distant from hence, and would require fifteen men to remove it.’ ‘I have well said,’ cried Zadig aloud, ‘that the stone would bear witness! Since this man knows where the stone lies, he confesses that the money was counted on it.’ The Jew, thus confounded, was soon constrained to confess the truth; and the judge ordered that he should be ~~fastened to the stone, without~~ meat or drink, till he had restored the money, which was then speedily paid. From that time, the slave Zadig, as well as the stone, were held in great esteem throughout all Arabia.

CHAP. X.

The Funeral Pile.

SETOC, transported with his good success, made Zadig his favourite companion. He valued him as much as the king of Babylon had formerly done; and, luckily for Zadig, the merchant had no wife. He discovered in his master a natural propensity to goodness, and found him to be a worthy and a sensible man; but he was concerned to see a person he so greatly esteemed paying divine adoration to a host of created, though celestial beings, according to the custom in Arabia of worshipping the sun, moon and stars. He sometimes cautiously introduced this important topick; and at length ventured to assert, that they were equally created with things of less lustre, and no more entitled to our adoration than a tree or a rock. ‘But,’ said Setoc, ‘these are eternal beings, from whom we derive every blessing we enjoy; they animate nature; they regulate the seasons; and are, in short, situate at such an infinite distance from us, that we cannot but revere them.’—‘You receive more advantages,’ replied Zadig, ‘from the waters of the Red Sea, which carry your merchandize to the Indies; and may not that be as ancient as the stars? Or if you will worship what is at a distance, you should rather pay your adoration to the land of the Gangarides, which is situate at the extremities of the earth.’—‘No,’ said Setoc, ‘the stars are so surpassingly brilliant, that it is impossible for me not to prefer them.’

In the evening Zadig lighted a great number of candles in the tent in which they were to sup; and as soon as Setoc appeared, threw himself on his knees before the flaming tapers, and thus addressed them,—‘Eternal and ever-shining brightness, be propitious to your votary!’ Having uttered these words, he sat down to table, without regarding Setoc. ‘What are

'you doing?' said Setoc, filled with astonishment. 'I act, Sir, like you,' replied Zadig; 'I adore these candles, and neglect their Master and mine.'

Setoc comprehended the profound sense of this apologue. The wisdom of his slave entered into his soul; and he no longer burned incense to created beings, but adored the Eternal who made them.

The Arabians had at that time a horrid custom, originally brought from Scythia, and which being established in the Indies by the credit of the Brachmans, threatened to spread its infection over all the East. When a married man died, and his dearly beloved wife wished to be esteemed a saint, she burned herself publicly on her husband's funeral pile. This was a solemn festival, called the widow's sacrifice; and the tribe in which most women had been thus burnt, was held in the greatest respect. An Arabian of the same tribe as Setoc being dead, his widow, named Almona, who was very devout, made known the day and hour in which she would throw herself into the pile, amidst the sound of drums and trumpets. Zadig remonstrated to his master, how contrary this horrible custom was to the welfare of the human race, that young widows should be every day permitted to burn themselves, who were capable of giving children to the state, or of educating those they had already; and he obliged him to acknowledge, that so barbarous a custom ought, if possible, to be totally abolished. 'It is now,' said Setoc, more than a thousand years since widows were in possession of the right of burning themselves; and who can change a law consecrated by time? Is there any thing more respectable than even an ancient error?' 'But reason is still more ancient and respectable,' replied Zadig. 'Do you, sir, communicate these sentiments to the chiefs of the tribes, and I will attend to the widow.'

Accordingly, he waited upon her; and, having insinuated himself into her favour by compliments to her

beauty, he urged what a pity it was that charms like her's should be consumed by fire, only to mingle ashes with a dead husband; and was lavish in his praises of her constancy and heroick fortitude. "You must surely 'have loved your husband extremely?' said he. 'No,' replied the lady, 'I loved him not at all. He was a 'brute; he was jealous; and so great a tyrant, that 'he was quite insupportable: but I have, notwithstanding, firmly resolved to throw myself on his funeral pile.'—"There is then, surely, said Zadig, 'a very delicious pleasure in being burnt alive!'—"Alas!" said the lady, 'the thought makes nature shudder; but that is not to be considered. I am a 'professed devotee; and, should I shew the least reluctance, my reputation would be for ever lost. In 'short, the whole world would despise me, if I did 'not burn myself.' Zadig having made her confess that she burnt herself merely to please others, and satisfy her vanity, conversed with her a long time, in such a manner, as not only to make her a little in love with life, but even proceeded so far as to inspire her with some degree of partiality for the speaker. 'What 'would you do,' said he, 'if the vanity of burning 'yourself should not prevail?'—"Alas!" replied she, 'I believe I should wish you to be my husband.'

Zadig was too much filled with the idea of Astarte, not to elude this warm declaration. He took his leave; and went instantly to the chiefs, whom he told what had passed, and advised them to make a law, that no widow should be permitted to burn herself till she had conversed with a young man one hour in private. The law was accordingly passed, and since that time no lady has burnt herself in Arabia. To Zadig they were indebted for destroying, in one day, a cruel custom that had lasted so many ages; and he was therefore very justly regarded, by all the ladies in Arabia, as their principal benefactor.

C H A P. XI.

The Supper.

SETOC, who could not long separate himself from Zadig, in whom he discovered so much wisdom, took him to the fair of Balzora, whither the richest merchants in the earth usually repaired. Zadig was delighted to see so many men of different countries assembled in the same place. It seemed to him as if the universe was one large family met together at Balzora. On the second day after his arrival, he sat at table with an Egyptian, an Indian, an inhabitant of Cathay, a Greek, a Celtick, and several other foreigners, who, in their frequent voyages to the Arabian Gulph, had learned sufficient Arabick to make themselves understood. The Egyptian appeared greatly exasperated : ‘ What an abominable place is Balzora ! ’ said he ; ‘ they here refuse me a thousand ounces of gold on the ‘ best security in the world ! ’—‘ How is that ? ’ said Setoc ; ‘ on what security have they refused you this ‘ sum ? ’—‘ On the body of my aunt,’ replied the Egyptian. ‘ She was one of the finest women in all ‘ Egypt ; she constantly accompanied me in my journeys, but unhappily died on the road. I made her one ‘ of the choicest mummies we have amongst us ; and ‘ might, in my own country, have whatever I pleased, ‘ by giving her as a pledge. It is exceedingly strange ‘ that they will not here lend a thousand ounces of gold ‘ on so solid a security ! ’ He was now going to vent his rage on an excellent boiled fowl ; when the Indian taking him by the hand, cried, in a sorrowful manner—‘ Ah ! what are you going to do ? ’—‘ To eat a wing ‘ of this fowl,’ said the Egyptian, ‘ as part of my ‘ supper ! ’—‘ Consider what you are doing,’ said the Indian : ‘ it is possible that the soul of the deceased ‘ may have passed into the body of that fowl ; and you ‘ would not, surely, expose yourself to the danger of

‘ eating your aunt ! The dressing of fowls is a manifest
‘ outrage on nature.’—‘ What do you mean by your
‘ nature and your fowls ?’ replied the cholerick Egyp-
‘ tian ; ‘ we worship oxen, and yet eat heartily of beef.’
—‘ Worship oxen ! is it possible ?’ cried the Indian.
‘ There is nothing so possible,’ returned the other : ‘ it
‘ is an hundred and thirty-five thousand years since we
‘ first did so, and nobody amongst us has ever yet found
‘ fault with it.’—‘ A hundred and thirty-five thousand
‘ years !’ said the Indian : ‘ this account must certain-
‘ ly be exaggerated ; it is but fourscore thousand since
‘ India was first inhabited, and we are certainly more
‘ ancient than you. Brama prohibited our eating cows
‘ before you put them on your altars or your spits.’—
‘ Your Brama is a pleasant sort of an animal, to be
‘ compared to our Apis,’ said the Egyptian. ‘ What
‘ mighty matter has your Brama ever done ?’—
‘ Why,’ replied the Braman, ‘ it is he who first taught
‘ mankind to read and write, and to him the whole
‘ earth is indebted for the noble game of chess.’—
‘ You deceive yourself, sir,’ said a Chaldean who stood
‘ near him ; ‘ we owe these great benefits to the fish Oan-
‘ nes ; and it is just that we should pay our homage
‘ only to him. All the world will tell you that he is a
‘ divine being ; that he had a golden tail, with the head
‘ of a most beautiful man ; and that, three hours every
‘ day, he left the water to preach upon land. Every
‘ body knows that he had many children, who were all
‘ powerful kings. I have his picture at home, to
‘ which, as in duty bound, I pray every evening before I
‘ retire to rest, and every morning when I arise. No
‘ doubt, people may eat as much beef as they please ;
‘ but it is surely a very great impiety to have fish serv-
‘ ed up at table. Besides, you are both of an origin
‘ too ignoble, and too recent, to dispute with me about
‘ any thing : the nation of the Egyptians reckon only
‘ one hundred and thirty-five thousand years, and the
‘ Indians boast but of fourscore thousand, while we

‘ have almanacks of four thousand centuries. Believe what I tell you, renounce your follies, and I will give to each of you a beautiful picture of our Oannes.’

The Chinese, or man of Cathay, joining in the discourse, said—‘ I greatly respect the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Greeks, the Celticks, Brama, Apis, and the beautiful Oannes; but it is possible that Li, or Tien*, as he is commonly called, is superior to all the bulls and fishes in the universe. I will say nothing of my country; though it is as large as the land of Egypt, Chaldea, and the Indies, together. I shall not dispute about antiquity, because it is sufficient we are happy; but, if it were necessary to speak of almanacks, I should say, that all Asia prefers ours, and that we had very correct ones before arithmetick was known in Chaldea.’

‘ Ignorant mortals!’ cried the Greek, ‘ have ye not yet been informed, that Chaos is the father of all, and that form and matter have put the world in its present state?’ He spoke thus for a long time; but was at length interrupted by the Celtick, who having drank pretty freely during the whole time of this debate, imagined himself more learned than all the others; and cried out, with a great oath, that there were none but Teutath, and the mistletoe of the oak, that were worth the trouble they were giving themselves; that, for his part, he had always mistletoe in his pocket; that the Scythians, his ancestors, were the only men of worth that had ever appeared in the world; and although they had, it was true, sometimes eat their countrymen, yet that was no reason why they ought not to have a great respect for his nation: in short, he declared, that if any one spoke evil of Teutath, he would soon teach him how to behave himself. The quarrel then grew warm, and Setoc began to fear the table would be presently stained with blood. Zadig,

* The Chinese term, *Li*, signifies *natural light*, or *reason*; and *Tien* signifies the *heavens*, or the *Supreme Being*.

who had kept silence during the whole dispute, at last arose. He first addressed himself to the Celtick, as being the most furious ; and, telling him he had reason on his side, begged to have some of his mistletoe. He expatiated on the eloquence of the Grecian ; and softened, in the most artful manner, all the contending parties. He said, indeed, but little to the man of Cathay, because he had been by far the most reasonable. At length he addressed them, in general terms, to this effect. ‘ My dear friends, you have been all this while contesting about an important topick, in which it is evident you are all unanimously agreed !’ At this word, they all cried out together. ‘ Is it not true,’ said he to the Celtick, ‘ that you do not adore this mistletoe, but him that made the mistletoe and the oak ?’—‘ Certainly,’ replied the Celtick. ‘ And you, the Egyptian, probably revere, in a certain ox, him who has given us all horned cattle ?’—‘ Yes,’ said the Egyptian. ‘ The fish Oannes,’ continued he, ‘ ought to yield to him who made both the sea and the fishes.’—‘ Agreed,’ said the Chaldean. ‘ The Indian and Cathaian,’ added he, ‘ acknowledge, like all the rest, a first principle. I have not, it is true, perfectly understood the admirable things which have been delivered by the Greek ; but I am fully persuaded he also will acknowledge a Superior Being, on whom form and matter entirely depend.’ The Greek, whose wisdom they all admired, confessed that Zadig had exactly penetrated his thoughts. ‘ You are then all of one mind,’ replied Zadig ; ‘ and there is no room for dispute.’ They then all embraced him ; and Setoc, after having sold his commodities at a very high price, returned home with Zadig. On their arrival at Oreb, they presently found that a prosecution had been carried on against Zadig in his absence, and that he was condemned to be burnt before a slow fire.

C H A P. XII.

The Rendez-vous.

WHILE Zadig attended his friend Setoc to Balzora, the priests of the stars determined to punish him. As all the costly jewels, and other valuable ornaments, of every young widow whom they sent to the funeral pile, became their property, it is not greatly to be wondered at, that they should be inclined to burn so great an enemy to their interests. They accordingly accused him of having erroneous sentiments with respect to the heavenly host: they made oath he had been heard to say the stars did not set in the sea. This frightful blasphemy made the judges tremble; they were ready to tear their vestments when they heard these impious words; and would doubtless have done it, if Zadig had had sufficient to pay them for new ones: but, in the excess of their grief, they were willing to content themselves with condemning him to be roasted alive before a slow fire. Setoc, reduced to despair, employed all his interest to save his friend; he was, however, soon obliged to be silent. The young widow Almona, who had conceived a great fondness for life, for which she was indebted to Zadig, resolved, if possible, to draw him from the funeral pile, which he had convinced her was greatly abused. She revolved her design in secret, without speaking to any one. Zadig was to be executed the next day, and she had only the night in which she could save him. Let us now behold the method pursued by this discreet and benevolent widow.

She made use of the most costly perfumes, and heightened the power of her charms by the richest and gayest apparel: she then went to demand a secret audience of the chief priest of the stars. On being admitted into his august and venerable presence, she addressed herself to him in these terms---‘Eldest son of the Great Bear, brother to the Bull, cousin to the Great Dog,’ [these were

the titles of the pontiff] 'I come to acquaint you with my scruples. My conscience tells me I have committed an enormous crime, in not burning myself on the funeral pile of my dear husband. What, in fact, had I worth sparing? Perishable flesh only, already wrinkled and dried up.' She then drew off, with a negligent but artful air, her long silk gloves, and displayed her naked arms, which were of an admirable form, and rivalled the snow in whiteness. 'You see,' said she, 'that these are little worth.' The pontiff found that his heart told him they were worth a great deal; his eyes said so; and his mouth confirmed it, by the most solemn protestations that he had never before seen such lovely arms. 'Alas!' said the widow, 'my arms may not be quite so bad as the rest; but you will confess that my neck was not worthy of the least regard.' She then discovered the most charming bosom that nature had ever formed. A rose bud on an apple of ivory, when compared to her breast, would have appeared like madder on the wood of the box-tree, and the whiteness of new-washed lambs would have seemed but a dusky yellow. Her delicate neck; her full black eyes, which languished with the soft lustre of a tender fire; her cheeks, which were animated with the most lovely purple, blended with the whiteness of the purest milk; her nose, which somewhat resembled the tower on Mount Lebanon; her lips, that were as two borders of coral enclosing the most beautiful pearls in the Arabian sea; in short, the pleasing combination of charms which appeared before him, made the old priest fancy himself not more than twenty; and, with a trembling voice, he began to utter a tender declaration of his passion. Almona, seeing him enflamed, begged he would pardon Zadig. 'Alas! lovely fair one!' said he, 'though I should grant you his pardon, my indulgence would be of little avail: it is necessary that it should be signed by three others, my brethren.'—'Sign it first, however,' replied Almona, 'I will do it freely,' said

the priest, 'on condition that your favours be the price of my readiness to serve you.'—'You load me with honour,' said Almona; 'but, if you will be pleased to come to my chamber after sun-set, and as soon as the bright star Sheat twinkles in the horizon, you will find me on a rose-coloured sofa, embroidered with silver, and you may there use your pleasure with your servant.' She then departed with Zadig's general pardon, which the pontiff had signed, and left him full of love, though not without distrust of his abilities. The remainder of the day he spent in bathing; he drank enlivening draughts of a liquor composed of the cinnamon of Ceylon, and the precious spices of Tidor and Ternate; and waited with great impatience the rising of the brilliant Sheat.

The lovely Almona, in the mean time, went to the second. He assured her, that the sun, the moon, and all the fires in the firmament, were but as insignificant meteors in comparison of her charms. She demanded the same favour of him, and he proposed to grant it at the same price. Almona suffered herself to be overcome, and appointed the second pontiff to meet her at the rising of the star Algenib. From thence she passed to the third, and to the fourth priest; still obtaining a signature from each, and making the assignations from star to star.

She then sent for the judges to come to her house on an affair of the greatest importance. They waited on her accordingly, and she laid before them the pardon of Zadig, signed with the names of the four priests, informing them of the conditions upon which it had been obtained. The priests, in the mean time, punctually kept their appointment, and each was greatly surprized at finding his brethren; but still more, at seeing there the judges, before whom his shame was manifest. By this stratagem Zadig was saved; and Setoc was so charmed at the dexterity of Almona, that he shortly after made her his wife.

Zadig now departed, having thrown himself at the feet of his fair deliverer: and Setoc and he separated from each other with tears, vowing a mutual and eternal friendship; and promising, that the first of the two who should raise a splendid fortune, should share it with the other.

Zadig travelled by the side of Assyria, constantly thinking on the unhappy Astarte, and reflecting on the fates, which seemed obstinately bent on sporting with him, and making him the subject of new persecutions. 'What,' said he, 'four hundred ounces of gold for not having seen a dog! condemned to lose my life for four lines of bad poetry in praise of the king! ready to be strangled because the queen looked kindly upon me!' reduced to slavery for having relieved a woman who was beat! and on the point of being consumed to ashes, for having saved the lives of all the young widows in Arabia.'

C H A P. XIII.

The Robber.

WHEN Zadig arrived on the frontiers which separate Arabia Petrea from Assyria, as he passed near a pretty strong castle, a party of armed Arabians sallied out; and immediately surrounding him, cried—'Whatever property you have belongs to us, and your persons are at the disposal of our master.' Zadig answered by drawing his sword; and his servant, who was a man of great courage, did the same. They presently overthrew those who had first attacked them; and though the numbers of their opponents redoubled, they seemed not at all dismayed, but resolved to die fighting. Two men fought against a multitude; and such a combat could not be of long continuance. The master of the castle, whose name was Arbogad, having beheld from a window the intrepid behaviour of Zadig, felt his mind filled with esteem: he descended in haste, and came himself to call

off his men, and to deliver the two travellers. 'What-
' ever passes over my territories,' said he, 'becomes
' my property, as well as what I find in the possession
' of others; but your bravery, sir, shall exempt you
' from this consequence.' He then made him enter
into his castle; ordered his domesticks to treat him
with the greatest respect; and in the evening they sup-
ped together.

Although Arbogad was an Arabian robber, yet,
amidst a multitude of bad actions, he sometimes per-
formed such as were worthy of the highest praise. He
plundered mankind, it is true, with a furious rapacity,
but he also behaved with great liberality. He was
intrepid in action; easy in his dealings; a debauchee
at his table, but gay even in his debauchery; and had,
above all, a free and open frankness. He was much
pleased with Zadig, the gaiety of whose conversation
prolonged their repast. At length Arbogad said to
him—'I advise you to enroll yourself under me; it is
' impossible for you to do better. My occupation is
' not a bad one, and you may one day become what I
' am at present.'—'I could wish to know,' replied
Zadig, 'how long you have exercised this noble pro-
' fession?'—'From my most tender youth,' returned
this great man: 'I was at first only servant to an
' Arabian; who, indeed, treated me kindly enough.
' But any state of servitude was to me insupportable:
' I was unhappy in considering that Fate had given
' me no portion in a world to which all mankind have
' an equal claim. I imparted my uneasiness to an old
' sage Arabian, and he thus endeavoured to comfort
' me—"My son," said he, "do not despair: there
' was formerly a grain of sand which lamented its
' being an atom unknown in the deserts; but at the
' end of some years it became a diamond, and is at
' present the richest and most admired ornament of
' the Indian crown.'" 'This discourse made a very
' strong impression upon me: I considered myself as
' the grain of sand, and determined, if possible, to be-

‘ come the diamond. Accordingly, I began by stealing two hories; associated to myself companions, and put myself in a condition to rob small caravans; and thus, by degrees, I soon lessened the disproportion there appeared between me and other people. I not only enjoyed my share of the good things of this life, but was even recompensed with usury for my former sufferings. I now grew much respected, and became the captain of a band of robbers. This castle was gained by violence: the satrape of Assyria, however, resolved to dispossess me; but I was too rich to have any thing to fear; for, by giving him money, I not only preserved this castle, but encreased my possessions. He even made me treasurer of the tributes which Arabia Petrea pays to the king of kings; and I punctually execute my office of collector, but shall not very speedily discharge that of paymaster.

‘ The great desterham of Babylon sent hither, in the name of King Moabdar, an insignificant satrape, with a commission to strangle me. This person arrived with his royal master’s warrant. I was apprized of the whole affair, and ordered his entire retinue, consisting of four inferior officers, to be strangled before his face, after the same manner as was intended for me. I then desired to know what he was to have obtained by my death. He replied, that his fees would have amounted to about three hundred pieces of gold. I laid before him the advantage he would gain by staying with me; constituted him an inferior robber; and he is now one of the best and richest officers. Believe me, your success will be as great as his. There never was a better season for robbery than at present, for Moabdar is lately killed, and all Babylon is in the greatest confusion.’—
 ‘ Moabdar killed!’ exclaimed Zadig; ‘ then what is become of Queen Astarte?’—‘ I cannot inform you,’ replied Arbogad: ‘ all I can tell is, that Moabdar lost his senses, and was murdered; that the people of

‘ Babylon are destroying one another; and that the whole empire is laid waste. There are some fine strokes yet to be taken; and, for my part, I have been already pretty successful.’—‘ But the queen, sir!’ said Zadig; ‘ are you acquainted with the fate of the queen?’—‘ I have heard something of a prince of Hircania,’ replied he: ‘ if she was not slain in the tumult, she is probably one of his concubines. But I am more anxious for booty than for news. I have taken many ladies in my excursions, but I never keep them. When they are beautiful I sell them for the best price I can, without minding who they are. Nothing is given on account of rank; and a queen who is ugly will never find any one inclined to buy her. Perhaps I may have sold the queen, or perhaps she may be dead; but that is of little importance to me, and I suppose you have no more reason to trouble yourself about it than I have.’ After this he drank so plentifully, that all his ideas were too much confused for Zadig to gain any farther information: he was struck dumb, confounded, and remained motionless as a statue. Arbogad continued drinking, told a number of merry stories, incessantly repeated that he was the happiest man alive, and invited Zadig to become as chearful as himself. At length, being overcome by the fumes of his liquor, he sunk into a profound sleep; while Zadig passed the night in the most violent agitations. ‘ What,’ said he, ‘ the king then has lost his senses! he is slain! I cannot but lament his fate. The empire is torn to pieces, and yet this robber is happy! O Fortune! O Destiny! A man who lives by rapine is happy; and the most amiable creature that Nature ever framed has, perhaps, either suffered an ignominious death, or lives in a state worse than even death itself! O Astarte! O Astarte! what is become of thee?’

As soon as day-light appeared, he enquired about Astarte of every one he saw; but all were busy, and

nobody made him any answer. During the night fresh plunder had been brought in, and they were employed in dividing the spoil. All he could obtain in this tumultuous confusion, was the permission to depart; of which he took advantage without delay, and left the castle of Arbogad more overwhelmed with grief and deep reflection than he had ever yet been.

Zadig proceeded on his way greatly agitated and disturbed: his thoughts were wholly employed on the unhappy Astarte; on the king of Babylon; on his faithful friend Cador; on Arbogad, the happy robber; on the capricious female whom the Babylonians had seized on the confines of Egypt; and, in short, on all the misfortunes, he had ever experienced.

C H A P. XIV.

The Fisherman.

WHEN Zadig had travelled some few leagues from the castle of Arbogad, he approached the banks of a small river, still lamenting his unhappy fate, and considering himself as the most unfortunate man existing. He there beheld a fisherman lying by the water-side, who was scarce able to hold, with his weak and trembling hand, a net which he seemed little to regard; and raising up his eyes towards heaven—‘I am certainly the most miserable wretch alive!’ said the fisherman: ‘I have been, in the opinion of every one, the most famous dealer in cream-cheese in all Babylon, and yet I am ruined. I had the most beautiful wife that a man in my station could wish; and by her I have been cruelly forsaken. There still remained my poor house; but even that I have seen pilaged and destroyed. I have taken shelter in a cabin; I have no other resource besides fishing, and yet I cannot catch a single fish. O my net! I will no more throw thee into the water; it is myself I will throw into it.’ On uttering these

words, he arose, and advanced forward, in the posture of a man going to throw himself into the stream, in order to put an end to his life. 'What,' said 'Zadig to himself, 'is there a man living more 'wretched than I?' His eagerness to save the fisherman was as sudden as this reflection. He ran to him; stopped him; and questioned him, with an air of pity and compassion. We seem to be less unhappy when we have companions in our misfortunes: according to Zoroaster, this is not owing to a malignant disposition, but is the effect of a fatal necessity; for we then find ourselves attached, to an unfortunate person, as to our own likeness. The transports of the happy would be insults; but two men in distress are like two weak and slender trees, which leaning together, mutually support and fortify each other against the storms that blow around them. 'Why,' said Zadig to the fisherman, 'do 'you sink under your misfortunes?—' Because I 'find no means of relief,' replied he. 'I have 'been the most considerable person in the whole village of Deriback, near Babylon; and I made, by 'my wife's assistance, the best cream-cheese in the 'empire of Persia. Queen Astarte, and the famous 'minister Zadig, admired them extremely. I sent 'to their houses six hundred cheeses, and one day 'went to the city to be paid; when I was informed, on my arrival in Babylon, that both the 'queen and Zadig had disappeared. I ran to the 'house of lord Zadig, whom I had never seen, and 'found there the officers of the grand desterham; 'who, being provided with a royal licence, plundered it with great loyalty and order. I then flew 'to the queen's kitchen; where some of the lords 'of the mouth told me she was dead, others that 'she was in prison, and others pretended that she 'was fled; but all of them assured me that my 'cheeses would never be paid for. I then went 'with my wife to lord Orcan's—for he was one

‘ of my customers—and we begged his protection
‘ in our distress. He readily granted it to my wife,
‘ but refused it to me. She was whiter, sir, than
‘ the cream-cheeses that began my misfortunes; and
‘ the bloom of her lovely cheeks was ten times more
‘ beautiful than the finest Tyrian purple: it was
‘ for this reason Orcan detained her, and refused his
‘ protection to me. I wrote to my dear wife a letter
‘ of desperation. She said to the messenger—
“ It is very well; I have some little knowledge of
“ the writer; I have heard speak of him: they say
“ he makes excellent cream-cheese; let him bring
“ me some, and he shall be paid.”

‘ In the height of my misfortunes, I determined
‘ to seek redress in a court of equity: I had but
‘ six ounces of gold, and it was necessary for me to
‘ give two ounces to my counsellor, two to the solicitor
‘ who undertook my affair, and the other two
‘ to the judge’s clerk. When all this was done,
‘ my business was not yet began, although I had
‘ expended more money than my cheese and my wife
‘ were worth. Notwithstanding this, I returned to
‘ the village, with an intention to sell my house,
‘ in order to regain my wife.

‘ My house was well worth sixty ounces of gold;
‘ but as my neighbours saw me poor, and obliged
‘ to sell it, the first to whom I addressed myself
‘ offered me thirty, the second twenty, and the third
‘ ten. At length, when I was ready to come to
‘ an agreement with one of them, the prince of Hircania
‘ came to Babylon; and, laying waste all before
‘ him, my poor house, among the rest, was first
‘ plundered of every thing valuable, and afterwards
‘ reduced to ashes.

‘ Having thus lost my money, my wife, and my
‘ house, I retired to the place where you now see
‘ me. I have endeavoured to procure my subsistence
‘ by fishing; but the fish, as well as all mankind,
‘ desert me: I scarce catch one in a day. I

‘ am ready to die with hunger; and had it not been
‘ for your kind interposition, I should ere now have
‘ perished in the river.’

The fisherman did not make this long recital all at once; for Zadig, moved and transported, every moment repeated—‘ What! do you not know what
‘ is become of the queen?’—‘ No, my lord, replied the fisherman; ‘ but this I know, to my grief,
‘ that neither the queen nor Zadig have paid me
‘ for my cream-cheeses: that my wife is taken from
‘ me; and that I am driven to the very brink of
‘ despair.’—‘ I flatter myself,’ said Zadig, ‘ that you
‘ will not lose all your money. I have heard much
‘ talk of this Zadig; they say he is an honest man;
‘ and if he return to Babylon, as it is to be hoped
‘ he will, no doubt but he will give you even more
‘ than he owes. But as for your wife, who does
‘ not appear to me over honest, I advise you not
‘ to seek after her. Take my advice, and make
‘ the best of your way to Babylon: I shall be there
‘ before you, because I shall ride, and you will go
‘ on foot. Address yourself to the illustrious Cad-
‘ dor, tell him you have seen his friend, and wait
‘ for me at his house. Go, follow my directions,
‘ and perhaps you may not always be unhappy.

‘ O puissant Orosmades!’ continued Zadig, ‘ thou
‘ makest use of me to bestow comfort on this man,
‘ whom thou hast ordained to give me comfort.’ In
speaking thus, he gave to the fisherman half the
money he had brought from Arabia; and the fish-
erman, transported with joy, and filled with amaze-
ment, kissed the feet of the friend of Cador, and
cried out—‘ You are certainly an angel sent to save
‘ me!’

Zadig, however, still continued to make fresh en-
quiries, not without tears. ‘ What, my lord,’ cried
the fisherman, ‘ are you then so unhappy, who have
‘ loaded me with benefits?’—‘ I am an hundred times
‘ more unhappy than you,’ replied Zadig. ‘ But

‘how is it possible,’ said he, ‘that the person who gives should have more cause for complaint than he who receives?’

‘It is because your greatest misfortunes,’ returned Zadig, ‘arose from your necessity, and mine from the heart.’—‘Has Orcan, then, taken your wife?’ said the fisherman. This last interrogation recalled to Zadig the remembrance of all his adventures: he repeated the train of his misfortunes, beginning with the queen’s dog, and ending with his arrival at the castle of the robber Arbogad. ‘Ah!’ said he to the fisherman, ‘Orcan deserves to be severely punished; but it is commonly such men as him who are the favourites of Fortune. However, go to my friend Cador’s immediately, and there wait for me.’ They then separated: the fisherman walked, thanking Destiny; and Zadig rode, constantly accusing the decrees of Fate.

CHAP. XV.

The Basilisk.

ZADIG being arrived in a very beautiful meadow, perceived several young Syrian females looking in the grass with great application. He took the liberty to approach one of them, and asked if he might have the honour to assist them in their search. ‘Take care what you do,’ replied the fair Assyrian; ‘what we are searching for can only be touched by a female.’—‘That is somewhat strange!’ said Zadig: ‘may I beg to be informed what this curiosity is that the ladies only are allowed to touch?’—‘It is a basilisk,’ replied she. ‘A basilisk, fair one! For what reason, pray, do you seek for a basilisk?’—‘It is,’ said she, ‘for our lord and master Ogul, whose castle you see on the banks of that river at the end of the meadow: we are all his most humble slaves. The lord Ogul is sick; and his physician has ordered him to eat

‘a basilisk stewed in rose-water. As this is a very scarce animal, and will suffer nothing to approach it but one of our sex, the lord Ogul has promised to chuse for his well-beloved wife her who first brings him a basilisk. Do not, therefore, longer detain me from the search, since you see what I shall lose if I am circumvented by my companions.’

Zadig then withdrew, and left the Syrian ladies in search of their imaginary booty, in order to pursue his intended journey. But when he came to the banks of a rivulet at the remotest part of the meadow, he perceived another female lying on the grass, who was not employed in seeking for any thing. Her stature seemed majestick, but her face was covered with a veil. She was leaning towards the brook, and profound sighs issued from her mouth. She held in her hand a small wand, with which she traced characters on a fine sand that lay between the turf and the brook. Zadig had the curiosity to draw near, in order to discover what this lady was writing. He approached her; he saw the letter Z; then an A; he was astonished: then appeared a D; he started. Never was surprize equal to his, when he saw the two last letters of his name. He stood for some time immoveable: at last breaking silence, with a faltering voice — ‘O generous lady!’ cried he, ‘forgive a stranger, an unfortunate man, who presumes to ask by what astonishing adventure he finds here the name of Zadig traced out by so lovely a hand?’ At this voice, and at these words, the lady arose; and with a trembling hand pulled up her veil, looked at Zadig, cast forth a cry of tenderness, surprize, and joy; and, sinking under the various emotions which at the same instant agitated her soul, fell senseless into his arms. It was Astarte herself; it was the queen of Babylon; it was she whom Zadig adored, and had reproached himself for adoring; it was she whom he had so deeply lamented, and for

whose fate he had been under such dreadful apprehensions! He was for a moment deprived of the use of his senses; while his eyes were fixed on the lovely Astarte, who now began to revive, and gazed on him with looks of the sweetest confusion and tenderness. 'O ye immortal powers!' cried he, 'who preside over the destiny of feeble mortals; have ye indeed restored Astarte to me! How strange the time, the place, the state, in which I see her!' He then threw himself on his knees before her, and laid his forehead amidst the dust of her feet; but the queen raised him up, and made him sit near her on the bank of the rivulet. She often wiped away the tears from her eyes, which as often were renewed by her grief; and more than twenty times resumed her discourse, which was so frequently interrupted by her sighs. She enquired by what accident they were brought together, and suddenly prevented his answer by new questions. She put a stop to the recital of her own misfortunes, and would know those of Zadig. In short, both having a little appeased the tumult of their souls, Zadig related in a few words the motives that had brought him thither. 'But tell me, O unhappy but ever worthy queen!' cried he, 'by what means is it that I find you in this solitary place, cloathed in this servile manner, and accompanied by other female slaves, who are in search of a basilisk; which I find is, by the order of a physician, to be stewed in rose-water, as a specifick for his dying patient?'

'While they are busied in the fruitless search,' said the lovely Astarte, 'I will acquaint you with what I have suffered since last I saw you; for which heaven has indeed sufficiently recompensed me, by permitting me to see you again.'

'You know the king my husband was displeased at your being the most amiable of all mankind, and that for this reason he took the resolution to have you strangled, and to poison me. You know, like-

‘ wise, how heaven permitted my little mute to inform
‘ me of the order given by his sublime majesty.’

‘ Scarce had the faithful Cador obliged you to comply with my request, and depart, than he ventured
‘ to enter my apartment at midnight, by a secret passage, and conveyed me to the temple of Orosmaides ;
‘ where the magi his brother shut me up in that huge
‘ statue, whose base reaches to the foundation of the
‘ temple, and whose head rises to the top of the dome.
‘ There I lay concealed, or rather buried, for some
‘ time ; but was carefully attended, and furnished with
‘ every necessary, by that venerable and loyal priest.
‘ In the mean time, the king’s apothecary entered my
‘ chamber by break of day, with a potion in his hand,
‘ composed of henbane, opium, hemlock, black helle-
‘ bore, and aconite ; and another officer went to yours,
‘ with a silk bowstring. Our flight had, however,
‘ happily frustrated their designs. Then Cador, the
‘ better to deceive the king, affected to accuse us both,
‘ and informed him that you had taken the road to
‘ the Indies, and that I was fled to Memphis : on
‘ which the guards were immediately dispatched after
‘ both of us.

‘ The couriers who went in search of me, knew
‘ nothing of my features ; for, by the king’s express
‘ orders, I had hardly ever shown my face to any be-
‘ sides yourself. They followed the pursuit, on the
‘ description that had been given them of my person ;
‘ till a woman of the same stature as myself, but who
‘ perhaps had more charms, appeared before them on
‘ the frontiers of Egypt. She was found alone, and
‘ in a very disconsolate condition ; they therefore made
‘ no doubt but that this woman was the queen of Ba-
‘ bylon, and accordingly took her to Moabdar. Their
‘ mistake at first threw the king into a violent rage ;
‘ but, having considered her more attentively, he found
‘ her extremely beautiful, and became reconciled.
‘ This lady was called Miffouf ; and I have since been

informed that her name, in the Egyptian tongue, signifies *the capricious fair one*: a title to which she certainly was well entitled. She had, however, as much art as caprice. She pleased Moabdar, and had sufficient influence over him to make him chuse her for his wife. She then began to unfold her real character, and gave herself up to all the fantastical whims of her vain imagination: she endeavoured to oblige the chief of the magi, who was old, and troubled with the gout, to dance before her; and, on his refusal, she made him suffer the effects of her resentment. She ordered her master of the horse to make her a pye of sweetmeats: the master of the horse wisely represented that he was not a pastry-cook; but his making the pye was an affair of great importance, and she degraded him from his office, for being too obstinate. She gave the post of master of the horse to her dwarf, and the place of chancellor to a page. In this manner did she govern Babylon. Every body regretted the loss of me. The king, who had behaved with great uprightness, till the moment he resolved to poison me, and cause you to be strangled, seemed to have drowned his virtues in the prodigious fondness he had discovered for the capricious fair. He came to the temple on the solemn festival of the sacred fire; and I saw him implore the gods in behalf of Miffouf, at the feet of the statue in which I was inclosed. I then raised my voice, and cried out—"The gods refuse to listen to the vows of a king, who is become a tyrant; who has sought the life of his innocent consort; and has suffered one to supply her place, who is distinguished only by her folly." At these words Moabdar was confounded, and his head became disordered. The oracle I had pronounced, and the behaviour of Miffouf, disturbed his judgment; and in a few days his reason entirely forsook him.

His madness, which seemed a chastisement from heaven, was as the signal of a revolt. The people

‘ arose; they ran to arms; and Babylon, that had so
‘ long indulged herself in indolence and ease, became
‘ the seat of a dreadful civil war. I was now taken
‘ from the hollow of the statue, and placed at the head
‘ of a party; and Cador hastened to Memphis, that he
‘ might bring you back to Babylon. The prince of
‘ Hircania, hearing of these fatal contests, came with
‘ his army, and made a third party in Chaldea. He
‘ attacked the king, who fled before him with his ca-
‘ pricious Egyptian. Moabdar was so closely pur-
‘ sued, that he died of the wounds he received in his
‘ retreat, and Missouf fell into the hands of the con-
‘ queror. I myself had the misfortune to be taken by
‘ a party of Hircanians, and was led to the prince, at
‘ the very instant when Missouf was brought before
‘ him. Your vanity will perhaps be flattered, by
‘ learning that the prince esteemed me more beautiful
‘ than the Egyptian: but you will no doubt be af-
‘ flicted to hear that he destined me for his seraglio.
‘ He told me, with great resolution, that, as soon as
‘ he had completed a military expedition which he
‘ was going to perform, he would honour me with a
‘ visit. Figure to yourself what was then my grief!
‘ The bonds which had bound me to Moabdar were
‘ broken; I had the opportunity of being the bride of
‘ Zadig, and was fallen into the power of a barbarian!
‘ I answered him with all the pride that sprung from
‘ my rank and lofty sentiments; having been always
‘ told that heaven bestowed on persons, like me, such
‘ peculiar marks of grandeur, as, with a word or
‘ glance, reduced to the lowliness of the most profound
‘ humility those rash persons who dared to swerve from
‘ their duty. I spoke like a queen; but was treated
‘ like the most servile domestick. The Hircanian,
‘ without even condescending to address himself to me,
‘ turned to his black eunuch, and told him that I was
‘ impertinent, but he thought me handsome. He or-
‘ dered him to take care of me, and to put me under

‘ the regimen of his favourites, to the end that, my
 ‘ colour being heightened, I might be rendered more
 ‘ worthy of his favours, on the day in which he should
 ‘ be pleased to honour me. I told him, that I would
 ‘ first put a period to my existence: he replied, laugh-
 ‘ ing, that life was a blessing too valuable to be thrown
 ‘ away; and that he was prepared for such speeches.
 ‘ He then left me, with the negligence of a person
 ‘ who had just put up a parrot in its gilded cage.
 ‘ What a state was this for the first queen of the uni-
 ‘ verse! and, what is more, for a heart devoted to
 ‘ Zadig!’

At these endearing expressions Zadig prostrated him-
 self before the queen, and bathed her feet with his
 tears: when Astarte tenderly raised him up, and pro-
 ceeded thus—‘ I found myself in the power of a bar-
 ‘ barian, and the rival of a silly coquette with whom I
 ‘ was confined. She related to me her adventure in
 ‘ Egypt; and I judged by the lineaments she painted,
 ‘ by the time, by the dromedary on which you was
 ‘ mounted, and by every circumstance, that Zadig had
 ‘ fought for her. I did not doubt of your being at
 ‘ Memphis, and therefore took the resolution to retire
 ‘ thither. “ Beautiful Missouf!” said I, “ you are
 “ much more agreeable than me; much better will
 “ you divert the prince of Hircania: facilitate as
 “ much as possible the means of my escape, you will
 “ then reign alone; and, while you render me happy,
 “ will at the same time free yourself from the fear
 “ of a rival.” Missouf listened to my request; she
 ‘ joined with me in concerting the means of my flight;
 ‘ and I secretly departed with an Egyptian slave.

‘ No sooner had we reached the borders of Arabia,
 ‘ than a famous robber, named Arbogad, seized upon
 ‘ me, and sold me to some merchants, who brought
 ‘ me to this castle, the abode of the lord Ogul, where
 ‘ I was purchased without being known. He is a
 ‘ man who delights in voluptuousness; seeks for no-
 ‘ thing but to gratify his appetites; and believes the

‘ Almighty has sent him into the world merely to sit
‘ at table. He is excessively corpulent, and in conti-
‘ nual danger of suffocation. His physician, whom he
‘ but little regards when he has a good digestion, go-
‘ verns him, when he has eat too much, with the most
‘ despotick sway. He has persuaded him at present
‘ that his life is in danger, and nothing can cure him
‘ but a basilisk stewed in rose-water: the lord Ogul
‘ has therefore promised his hand to the female slave
‘ who first brings him a basilisk. You see I have left
‘ them to obtain this honour; and I never had less desire
‘ to find the basilisk, than since heaven has permitted
‘ me to see you again.’

After this declaration, they gave utterance to those tender sensations that had been so long smothered, and said all that love and misfortunes can inspire in hearts the most noble and passionate; while the Genii who preside over love wasted their mutual vows of eternal constancy and truth even to the sphere of Venus.

The whole train of slaves, after a long and fruitless search, returned to Ogul; when Zadig presented himself before him, and spoke to this effect—‘ May immortal health descend from heaven to preserve a life
‘ so precious as yours! I am a physician, and have
‘ hastened hither, at the report of your sickness, with a
‘ basilisk stewed in rose-water. As I can have no
‘ benefit of the high reward you have offered, in case
‘ my application succeeds, I only desire the liberty of
‘ a young Babylonian slave you have for some days
‘ had in your possession; and I consent to remain in
‘ slavery in her place, if I am not so happy as to restore
‘ the magnificent and illustrious lord Ogul to his
‘ former health and vigour.’

The proposal was accepted immediately, and Astarte set out for Babylon; promising speedily to send a courier to inform Zadig of all that should have passed. Their parting was as their meeting had been. The moment in which we meet, and in which we separate,

are (as it is written in the Sacred book of Zend) the two most remarkable epochas of life. Zadig's love for the queen equalled his protestations; and the queen's love for Zadig was much greater than her words expressed.

In the mean time, Zadig spoke thus to Ogul—' My lord, my basilisk is not to be eaten; all its virtues must penetrate through the pores. I have put it in a little ball, blown up and covered with a fine skin: you must strike it with all your strength; and I must strike it back for some time. When you have for a few days practised this regimen, the effects of my art will be perceived.' On the first day Ogul was quite fatigued, and imagined he could not survive; on the second he was less tired, and slept better; in eight days he recovered all the strength, health, activity, and vigour, of his most agreeable years. ' You have played at ball and been moderate,' said Zadig. ' Know, then, that there is no such creature on earth as a basilisk; that exercise and temperance are friends to health; and that the art of making health and intemperance subsist together, is as chimerical as judicial astrology, or the philosopher's stone.'

Ogul's former physician now perceiving how dangerous this man was to the cause of physick, raised a party amongst his dependants in order to destroy him; but, while they were concerting the destruction of Zadig, he received a courier from queen Astarte.

CHAP. XVI.

The Tournament.

THE queen was received at Babylon with all those transports which are usually felt in favour of injured beauty. Babylon was at this time perfectly quiet and serene. The prince of Hircania had been slain in battle; and the Babylonians being conquerors, declared that Astarte should marry him whom they should chuse for their sovereign. They would not

have the first office in the world, that of husband to Astarte, and King of Babylon, depend on intrigues and cabals; they therefore swore to acknowledge for their king only him who was most valiant and possessed of the greatest wisdom. The lists were marked out at some leagues from the city, and surrounded by a magnificent amphitheatre. The combatants were to repair thither completely armed, and each had behind the amphitheatre a separate apartment, where he was neither to be seen nor known by any one. He was successively to encounter four knights; and those who were so happy as to conquer that number, were afterwards to engage against each other, in such a manner as that he who remained the last master of the field should be proclaimed conqueror at the games.

Four days after, he was to return with the same arms, and to explain such enigmas as the magi should propose; and, if he did not explain them, he was not to be king. The running at the lances was then to begin again, till a man should be found who was conqueror at both these combats; for they were resolutely bent on having a king possessed of the greatest valour and the most consummate wisdom. During all this time the queen was to be closely guarded, and only permitted to be a distant spectator of the games, covered with a veil; but they would not allow her to speak to any of the competitors, that they might have neither favour nor injustice.

Astarte made known to her lover the preliminary articles above mentioned, not doubting but he would shew himself, in such a cause, superior to every other person both in valour and wisdom. Zadig accordingly set out for Babylon; and besought Venus to fortify his courage, and illuminate his understanding, on this very important occasion.

He arrived on the banks of the Euphrates on the eve of this great day, and caused his device to be inscribed among those of the combatants, concealing his

face and name, as the law required, and then went to repose himself in the apartment allotted him.

His friend Cador, who was returned to Babylon, after having in vain sought for him in Egypt, sent to his lodge a complete suit of armour, presented him by the queen, and also from himself the finest horse in Persia. Zadig attributed these presents to Astarte; and from this consideration his courage and his love derived fresh strength, and his mind was inspired with new hopes.

The next morning the queen having placed herself under a canopy sparkling with jewels, and the amphitheatre being filled with all the ladies, and with people of every station in Babylon, the combatants appeared in the circus. Each of them came and laid his device at the feet of the grand magi; with these devices they drew lots, and that of Zadig was the last. The first who advanced, was a lord of great wealth, named Itobad; he was filled with vanity, had little courage, was extremely awkward, and almost void of understanding. His parasites had persuaded him that such a man as he ought to be a king; he had answered them—‘Such a man as me ought to reign.’ They had therefore armed him from head to foot. His armour was pure gold covered with green enamel; he had a plume of green feathers, and a lance adorned with green ribbands. It was quickly perceived, by the manner in which Itobad governed his horse, that it was not for such a man as him that heaven had destined the sceptre of Babylon. The first knight who tilted with him, drove him out of his saddle; the second threw him backwards over the horse’s crupper, with his legs in the air, and his arms extended. He soon recovered himself, however, but with so ill a grace, that all the amphitheatre laughed heartily. A third disdained to use his lance against him, but making a feigned pass, took him by the right leg, and turning him half round, threw him upon the sand. The squires who attended ran

laughing to his assistance, and replaced him in his saddle. The fourth knight then caught him by the left leg, and threw him off on the other side. After this, he was conveyed with scornful shouts from the multitude to his lodge, where, according to the rule prescribed, he was obliged to pass the night; and, as he hobbled with great difficulty along—‘What an adventure,’ sighed he, ‘is this, for such a man as me!’

The other knights performed their duty much better. There were those who conquered two combatants one after another; some proceeded even to three: none, however, but Prince Otamus, vanquished four. Zadig, at last, entered the lists, and successively threw four knights out of their saddles with the most graceful ease imaginable. It now remained to be tried whether Otamus or Zadig should be conqueror. The armour of the first was blue and gold, with a plume of the same colours; Zadig’s were white. The wishes of the multitude were divided between the blue knight and the white. The queen, whose heart suffered the most violent palpitations, fervently petitioned heaven in behalf of the white.

The two champions made their passes and volts with such agility, they mutually gave and received such shocks from each other’s lances, and sat so firmly in their saddles, that every one but the queen wished to have two kings in Babylon. At last, their horses being weary, and their lances broken, Zadig made use of this stratagem; he passed artfully behind his antagonist, sprung nimbly upon his horse, seized the knight in his arms, threw him to the earth, and placing himself on the saddle, wheeled about Otamus, who lay extended in the dust. All the spectators cried out with loud acclamations ‘Victory to the white knight!’ Otamus, highly enraged, arose and drew his sword, and Zadig leaped from his horse with his sabre in his hand. They were now both on the ground, engaged in a new combat, where strength and agility

triumphed by turns. The plumes of their helmets, the studs of their brassards, and the rings of which their armour was composed, flew afar off, by the force of a thousand precipitate blows. They sometimes struck at each other with their swords, at other times they thrust, as occasion best served; now on the right, then on the left; now on the head, then at the breast: they retreated, they advanced; they kept at a distance, they closed again; they grappled with each other, twining themselves like serpents; in short, they struggled and engaged as fiercely as two Lybian lions fighting for their prey, and their swords struck fire almost at every blow. At last Zadig for a moment stood still, and having in an instant recovered his breath, made a false pass at the prince, threw him on the ground, and disarmed him. Otamus then cried out — ‘O thou knight in white armour! it is you alone who are destined to reign over Babylon.’ The queen was transported with joy. The knight in blue armour, and the knight in white, were each conducted to their lodges, in conformity to the rules prescribed, and they were waited on by mutes, who carried them proper refreshments. It is easy to imagine that the queen’s dwarf was appointed to wait on Zadig. After supper the mutes withdrew, and left the combatants to rest their wearied limbs till the next morning, when the conqueror was to produce his device before the grand magi, to compare it, and to make himself known.

Zadig slept pretty sound, notwithstanding his affection for the queen, so much was he fatigued: but Itobad, who lay near him, could not once close his eyes; he arose therefore during the night, entered Zadig’s lodge, took his white armour and device, put his green armour in their place, and at day-break went boldly to the grand magi, to declare himself the mighty hero, the thrice happy conqueror. It is true, no one expected to see him the victor; he was, however, proclaimed, while Zadig

still slept. Astarte, astonished, and with her heart filled with despair, returned to Babylon. When Zadig awoke, the amphitheatre was almost empty; he sought for his arms, but finding none but the green, he was obliged to cover himself with them, because he had nothing else near him: confounded and enraged, he put them on, and went forth in this equipage.

Those who still remained in the circus, now received him with hootings; they surrounded him, and insulted him to his face: never man suffered such humbling mortifications. At length his patience forsook him; he dispersed, by striking with his sabre, the populace who dared to affront him; but he knew not what measures to pursue, or how to rectify the mistake. He could not see the queen, nor could he reclaim the white armour she had sent him, without exposing her: thus, while plunged in grief, he was filled with rage and inquietude. He walked on the banks of the Euphrates, fully persuaded that Fate had destined him to be irremediably wretched, and revolving in his mind all his misfortunes, from the adventure of the damsel who had an aversion to one-eyed men, to that by which he had lost his armour. 'This has happened,' said he, 'from my having awaked too late. Had I slept less, I should not only have been king of Babylon, but should also have been completely happy in the embraces of my dearest Astarte. The vast knowledge of the sciences, the sincere love of virtue, and the personal strength and courage I can boast, have answered no other purpose than involving me in misfortunes.' He at last presumed to murmur at the unequal dispensation of Divine Providence: and was tempted to believe that all occurrences were governed by a cruel destiny, which oppressed the good, and gave prosperity to knights in green armour. One cause of his vexation was, his wearing the very green armour which had drawn on him such disgrace; and a merchant happening to pass by, exchanged it for a robe

and bonnet. In this dress he walked along the banks of the Euphrates, filled with the deepest despair, and secretly accusing Providence for involving him in so many afflictions.

CHAP XVII.

The Hermit.

WHILE Zadig was thus rambling, he met a hermit, whose white and venerable beard descended even to his girdle, and who held in his hand a book which he seemed to read with much attention. Zadig approached him with a most profound obeisance, and the hermit returned his salute with an air so noble and beneficent, that he had the curiosity to converse with him. He asked of the venerable stranger the subject of the book he was reading; who informed him, it was the Book of Fate; and demanding if he wished to peruse it, put the book into his hands. Zadig, notwithstanding he was versed in many languages, could not explain a single character; this still more increased his curiosity. 'You appear to me much disturbed,' said the good father. 'Alas! I have but too much reason to be so,' said Zadig. 'If you permit me to accompany you,' replied the hermit, 'perhaps I may be of service to you; for I have sometimes poured the balm of consolation into the souls of the unhappy.' The air, the beard, and the book of the hermit, filled Zadig with the greatest respect for this venerable stranger, whose conversation diffused a superior and sublime knowledge into his soul. He discoursed of destiny, of justice, of morals, of the sovereign good, of human frailty, and of virtues and vices, with such a lively and persuasive eloquence, that Zadig felt himself attached to his person by an irresistible charm, and earnestly entreated the venerable stranger not to leave him till they returned to Babylon. 'I myself desire this favour,' said the old man: 'I swear by Orosmades, that whatever I do, you

‘ will not leave me for some days at least.’ Zadig signified his assent, and they set out together.

The two travellers arrived that evening at a superb castle, when the hermit begged an hospitable reception for himself and the young man who accompanied him. The porter, who might have been taken for a great lord, introduced them with a kind of disdainful goodness; and they were conducted to a principal domestic, who shewed them the magnificent apartments of his master. They were admitted to the lower end of his table, without being honoured by the lord of the castle with the least notice; but were served with the same delicacy and profusion as the rest of his guests. After supper, water was brought them to wash, in a gold basin adorned with rubies and emeralds; and they were then conducted to an apartment richly furnished, in which they took their rest. When they arose in the morning, a servant presented to each a piece of gold, and they proceeded on their way.

‘ The lord of this castle,’ said Zadig, as they passed along, ‘ appears to me a very hospitable man, though somewhat too haughty.’ While he uttered these words, he took notice that the hermit’s pocket, though very large, was considerably extended, and soon perceived that this appearance was occasioned by the golden basin which his fellow traveller had stolen. He was afraid to mention what he saw, but the thoughts of it gave him much concern. About noon, the hermit stood before the door of a little cottage, the residence of a rich miser, and desired they might refresh themselves for a few hours; when an old servant, ill clothed, let them in with a visible reluctance, and conducted the hermit and Zadig into a stable, where he gave them some rotten olives, bad bread, and sour beer. The hermit eat and drank with as contented an air as he had done the preceding evening: then addressing himself to the old servant, who carefully watched them both, to see that they stole nothing, and often reminded them that the day was declining apace, he gave him the two

pieces of gold he had received in the morning, and thanked him for his respectful behaviour. 'Pray,' added he, 'permit me to speak to your master.' The servant, filled with astonishment, introduced the two travellers. 'Munificent lord!' said the hermit, 'I cannot but render you my most humble thanks for the friendly manner in which you have received us: be pleased to accept this golden basin, as a small testimony of my gratitude.' The miser started, and was ready to fall to the earth; the hermit, however, did not give him time to recover from his surprize, but instantly departed with his young traveller. 'Father,' said Zadig, 'what is the meaning of all I have seen?' 'In nothing do you appear to resemble other men: you have stole a gold basin set with precious stones from a lord who entertained us magnificently, and have given it to a sordid wretch who treated you with the greatest indignity.'---'My son,' replied the hermit, 'that magnificent personage, who entertains strangers with no other view than to gratify his pride, and raise their astonishment at the richness of his furniture, will become more wise for the future; and the miser will henceforth learn better to exercise the duties of hospitality. Be astonished at nothing; but follow me.' Zadig was not yet certain whether his companion was the silliest person in the world, or one who surpassed all mankind in wisdom and discernment: but the hermit spoke with such authority, that Zadig, not to mention his oath, could not help following him.

At night they arrived at a house very commodiously built, though with great simplicity, and without the least appearance either of prodigality or avarice. The master was a philosopher, who had retired from the world, that he might cultivate in peace his improvement in wisdom and virtue. In this retreat he received strangers with great cordiality, but without any ostentation. He went himself to introduce the two travellers, and led them to a commodious apartment, where he

desired they would rest themselves. Some time after, he came himself to invite them to a frugal, but genteel repast; during which he talked very intelligently about the late revolutions in Babylon. He appeared sincerely attached to the queen, and wished that Zadig had appeared in the lists to dispute the crown: 'But the people,' added he, 'do not deserve to have a king like Zadig.' A modest blush diffused itself over the cheeks of Zadig at this unexpected compliment, which not only renewed, but redoubled the keen sense of his misfortunes. It was agreed that the affairs of this world are not always conducted so as to please the wise: but the hermit steadily maintained, that the ways of Providence were unknown; and that men were to blame to judge of the whole, when they perceived only the smallest part.

The next topic of their discourse was that of the passions. 'Alas!' said Zadig, 'how fatal are their effects!'---'They are the winds which swell the sails of the vessel,' returned the hermit. 'Sometimes, it is true, they sink it; but there is no sailing without them. The bile renders us sick and choleric, but is yet necessary for the support of life: thus every thing below is dangerous, yet still every thing is necessary.'

They then discoursed of pleasures, and the hermit demonstrated that they were the gifts of Heaven. 'Man,' said he, 'can give himself neither sensations nor ideas, he receives them all; his pain and pleasure are therefore derived from the same source as his being.'

Zadig was astonished, that a man who had committed such base actions should be able to reason so well. At length, after a conversation, as instructive as it was agreeable, their host led the two strangers back to their apartment, blessing Heaven for having sent him two men so wise and so virtuous. He offered them money in so free a manner, that it was impossible they could be displeased. The hermit refused it, and said that he must take his leave, as he intended to set out

for Babylon before it was light. Their separation was polite and tender: Zadig, especially, felt himself filled with esteem and affection for a man of so amiable a disposition. When the hermit and he were retired to their apartment, they spent a long time in bestowing praises on their host. At break of day the old hermit awaked his companion: 'We must now,' said he, 'depart for Babylon; but while every body is yet asleep, I will leave our entertainer a testimony of my esteem and affection.' On saying these words he lighted a candle, and immediately set fire to the house. Zadig, in the utmost confusion, shrieked out, and would have prevented his committing so horrid an action; but the old man drew him away by a superior force, and the house was soon in flames. When they had reached a convenient distance, the hermit, with amazing serenity, turned to survey the destructive flames. 'Thanks be to God,' said he; 'the house of my dear host will be totally destroyed! happy, happy man!' Zadig was now tempted, at one and the same instant, to laugh at, to reproach the reverend father, to beat and to leave him: he did not, however, think proper to do either; for, subdued by the consequence the hermit had assumed, he followed him, in spite of himself, to the place where they were to take their rest. This was a charitable and virtuous widow's, who had a nephew about fourteen years of age; he was a very promising youth, and constituted her chief happiness. She performed, as well as she was able, the honours of her house; and the next day ordered her nephew to accompany the travellers to an adjacent bridge, which being lately broken down, was dangerous to be passed by strangers.

The youth being attentive to wait on them, walked cheerfully forward. When they were on the bridge--- 'Come,' said the hermit, 'I must shew my gratitude to your aunt.' He then took him gently by the hair, and with great calmness plunged him into the river. The youth immediately sunk; but soon appeared again on the surface of the water, and was swallowed up by

the torrent. 'O monster! O most wicked of men!' cried Zadig. 'You have promised to behave with greater patience,' said the hermit interrupting him. 'Learn, then, that under the ruins of that house which Providence has consumed by fire, the master has found an immense treasure, which will enable him the better to exert his beneficence, and render his virtues still more conspicuous. Learn, also, that this youth, whose life Providence has taken away by an untimely death, would have slain his aunt within the space of a year, and thee in that of two.'---'Who told you so, barbarian?' cried Zadig. 'And even though you had read such an event in your detested Book of Fate, are you permitted to drown a youth who never injured you?'

While Zadig thus spoke, he perceived that the old man had no longer a beard, and that his face discovered the soft traces of blooming youth; the hermit's habit disappeared, and four lovely wings covered a majestic form resplendent with light. 'O messenger of Heaven! O divine angel!' cried Zadig, falling prostrate on the earth; 'you are then descended from the Empyrean, to teach a frail mortal submission to the orders of the Eternal!'---'Man,' said the angel Jesrad, 'judges of all, without knowing any thing. You alone, of all the human race, are the man who best deserved to be enlightened,' Zadig begged that he would permit him to speak. 'I distrust myself,' said he; 'but suffer me to entreat you to remove one scruple from my mind. Would it not have been better to have corrected the child, and have rendered him virtuous, than to have drowned him in the river?' Jesrad replied---'If he had been virtuous, and had lived, he would himself have been assassinated, together with the wife he would have married, and the little infant, which in that case was destined to be the pledge of their mutual affection.'---'But why,' said Zadig, 'is it necessary that there should be crimes and misfortunes, and that misfortune should fall on

‘ the guiltless ? ’ ‘ The wicked,’ replied Jesrad, ‘ are
‘ always unhappy. Misfortunes serve only as a touch-
‘ stone, to prove a small number of the just thinly
‘ scattered throughout the earth; nor is there any evil
‘ from which some good doth not proceed.’---‘ What,’
said Zadig, ‘ if there was only good, and no evil ? ’
‘ Then,’ replied Jesrad, ‘ this earth would be another
‘ earth; the chain of events would be another arrange-
‘ ment, conducted by wisdom; but this other arrange-
‘ ment, which would be absolutely perfect, can exist
‘ only in the eternal abode of the Supreme being, where
‘ no evil is permitted to approach. He has created
‘ millions of worlds, among which there are not two
‘ that resemble each other. This immense variety pro-
‘ ceeds from his omnipotence. There are no two leaves
‘ among the trees of the earth, nor two globes in the
‘ infinite fields of light, that perfectly resemble one
‘ another; and all that you see on the little atom
‘ whereon you are born, must of necessity exist in it’s
‘ own place, and at it’s appointed time, according to
‘ the immutable decrees of him who comprehends the
‘ whole. Mankind imagine that the child who has
‘ just perished, is fallen into the water by chance; and
‘ that it was also by chance that the house of our ge-
‘ nerous benefactor was consumed: but there is no
‘ such thing as chance or accident; it is all either a
‘ trial, a punishment, a reward, or a foresight. Re-
‘ member the poor fisherman, who thought himself the
‘ most unhappy of men, Orosmades sent you to change
‘ his destiny. Cease, then, frail mortal, to dispute
‘ against what it is your duty to adore.’---‘ But-----’
said Zadig. As he pronounced the word ‘ but,’ the
angel took his flight towards the tenth heaven. Zadig
funk on his knees and adored the wonders of Provi-
dence, with every mark of the most profound submis-
sion: when the angel cried from on high---‘ Proceed
towards Babylon.’

C H A P. XVIII.

The Ænigmas.

ZADIG, like a person deprived of his senses by loud claps of thunder, walked on without knowing whither. He, however, reached Babylon, on the day in which those who had fought at the tournaments were assembled in the vestibule of the palace, to explain the ænigmas, and to answer the questions of the grand magi; and all the knights were arrived except him who wore the green armour. - As soon as Zadig appeared in the city, the people assembled about him; their eyes were not satisfied with seeing him, their lips poured forth blessings upon him, and their hearts wished him the empire. The envious man saw him pass; he frowned, and turned aside. The people, with loud acclamations, attended him even to the palace gate. The queen, who had heard of his arrival, was in the utmost agony between fear and hope. Inquietude took possession of her mind; she could neither comprehend why Zadig was without arms, nor how Itobad became possessed of the white armour. A confused murmur run through the whole assembly at the sight of Zadig; they were surprized and charmed at seeing him; but none besides the knights who had fought were permitted to appear in the court. Zadig, however, cried out --- 'I have taken my share in the combats, though another bears my arms; and while I wait till I have the honour to prove my assertion, I demand permission to be admitted, that I may endeavour to explain the ænigmas.' The magi put Zadig's request to the vote; and his reputation for probity was still so strongly imprinted on their minds, that they unanimously agreed to admit him.

The first question proposed by the grand magi was this--- 'What is the longest, and yet the shortest thing in the world; the swiftest, and most slow; the most divisible, and the most extended; the least valued, and

‘ the most regretted; without which nothing can be done; which devours all that is small, and yet gives life and spirit to every thing that is great?’

Itobad had the honour to speak first. He replied, that so great a man as he had no knowledge of *ænigmas*; and that it was enough for him to have conquered by his valour and the strength of his arm. Some said, that the meaning of the *ænigma* was *fortune*; others the *earth*; others, the *light*: but Zadig said that it was *TIME*. ‘ Nothing is longer,’ added he, ‘ since it is the measure of eternity; nothing is more short, since it is insufficient to compleat our projects; nothing is more slow to him who waits, nothing more rapid to him who enjoys; it extends in greatness even to infinitude; it is divisible into infinite smallness; all men neglect it; all lament it’s loss; nothing can be done without it: it consigns to oblivion what is unworthy of being known by posterity; and it immortalizes great and noble actions.’ The assembly agreed unanimously that Zadig was in the right.

The next question was---‘ What is the thing that we receive without thanks, which we enjoy without knowing how, which we give to others without knowing where it is to be found, and which we lose without being conscious of it’s loss?’

Every one gave his own explication; but Zadig alone said that it was *LIFE*: and he solved all the other *ænigmas* proposed with equal facility. Itobad constantly said that nothing was more plain, and that he could have answered them with the same ease, if he had been inclined to have given himself the trouble. Questions were then proposed respecting justice, the sovereign good, and the art of government. Zadig’s answers were still judged to be the most solid. ‘ What a pity it is,’ said the magi, ‘ that a person of such consummate wisdom should be so bad a knight!’

‘ Most illustrious lords,’ cried Zadig, ‘ I have had the honour to be conqueror in the tournaments, and it is to me that the white armour belongs. Lord Ito-

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ZADIG. Chap. 17. P. 77.
Zadig, prostrating himself at
the Feet of the Angel Jeshad.

had took possession of it while I slept; judging, perhaps, that it would fit him better than the green. I am, however, ready to encounter before this august assembly, with my gown and sword, the usurper of the white armour, that you may be enabled to judge who it is that has had the honour of conquering the brave Otamus.'

Itobad, with the greatest confidence, accepted this challenge. His head being guarded by a helmet, his breast and back by his cuirass, and his arms by his brassards, he entertained no doubt but that he should easily obtain the advantage over a champion in a cap and gown. Zadig drew his sabre, and with it saluted the queen, who viewed him with a mixture of joy and fear. Itobad drew his, and, without any salutation, rushed on Zadig like one who had nothing to fear, and was determined to bear down all before him. Zadig, however, knew how to prevent the blow, by opposing the strongest part of his sword to the weakest of his adversary's, by which means Itobad's sword was quickly broken. Zadig then seized him round the body, threw him to the earth, and placing the point of his sword to the opening of his cuirass----'Suffer yourself to be disarmed,' said Zadig, 'or I will this moment take your life.' Itobad, always surprized that any disgrace should happen to a person of his consequence, suffered Zadig to do as he pleased. He therefore very peacefully took away his magnificent helmet, his superb cuirass, his rich brassards, and his brilliant cuisses; and cloathing himself with them, ran in this dress to throw himself at Astarte's feet. Cadore easily proved that the white armour belonged to Zadig; and he was thereupon acknowledged King of Babylon by the unanimous consent of the whole assembly; and more particularly with the approbation of Astarte; who, after such a series of misfortunes, had the happiness of seeing her beloved Zadig thought worthy to possess her in the eyes of all the world. Itobad withdrew, and was obliged to content himself with being called plain *lord* in his own

house; while Zadig was elected king, and possessed happiness equal to his wishes. He now began to reflect on what the angel Jesrad had said to him; he remembered the story of the grain of sand which became a diamond; and both himself and Astarte admired the wonders of Providence. He permitted Missouf, the capricious beauty, to roam where she pleased; and sent in search of Arbogad, the robber, to whom he gave an honourable post in the army, with a promise of advancing him to the highest dignities, if he behaved like a soldier of honour; but assured him he should be punished without mercy, if he continued to follow the profession of a robber.

Setoc was called from the farthest confines of Arabia, together with the fair Almona, to preside over the commercial affairs of Babylon; and Cadore was promoted to one of the highest offices in the state, as the reward of his distinguished services, and was the king's chief favourite: indeed, he was strictly the friend of the king; and Zadig was then the only monarch on earth who had so true a friend. The little mute was not forgotten; and a very genteel house was given to the fisherman, to whom Orcan was condemned to pay a large sum of money, as well as to restore his wife: the fisherman had, however, obtained wisdom; he took only the money.

Zadig did not leave the beautiful Semira disconsolate, who had deserted him when she feared he would be blind of one eye; nor Azora comfortless, who had been willing to cut off his nose; but endeavoured to alleviate their sorrows by the most munificent presents. The envious Arimazes, indeed, died with shame and vexation. The empire now enjoyed peace, glory, and all the blessings of plenty. This was the most illustrious age of the earth. Babylon was wholly governed by justice and love. The people blessed Zadig, and Zadig blessed Heaven.

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THE END OF ZADIG.

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